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Titles in the Collection—Fall 2015

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The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian by Sherman Alexie

In his first book for young adults, bestselling author Sherman Alexie tells the story of Junior, a budding cartoonist growing up on the Spokane Indian Reservation. Determined to take his future into his own hands, Junior leaves his troubled school on the rez to attend an all-white farm town high school where the only other Indian is the school mascot. Heartbreaking, funny, and beautifully written, the book chronicles the contemporary adolescence of one Native American boy. Poignant drawings by acclaimed artist Ellen Forney reflect Junior's art. 2007 National Book Award winner. Fiction. Young Adult. 229 pages

The Abstinence Teacher by Tom Perrotta

A controversy on the soccer field pushes Ruth Ramsey, the human sexuality teacher at the local high school, and Tim Mason, a member of an evangelical Christian church that doesn't approve of Ruth's style of teaching, to actually talk to each other. Adversaries in a small-town culture war, they are forced to take each other at something other than face value. Fiction. 358 pages

The Age of Miracles by Karen Thompson Walker

On a seemingly ordinary Saturday in a California suburb, Julia and her family awake to discover, along with the rest of the world, that the rotation of the earth has suddenly begun to slow. The days and nights grow longer and longer, gravity is affected, the environment is thrown into disarray. Yet as she struggles to navigate an ever-shifting landscape, Julia is also coping with the normal disasters of everyday life—the fissures in her parents' marriage, the loss of old friends, the hopeful anguish of first love, the bizarre behavior of her grandfather who, convinced of a government conspiracy, spends his days obsessively cataloging his possessions. As Julia adjusts to the new normal, the slowing inexorably continues. Fiction. 284 pages

Ahab's Wife by Sena Jeter Naslund

Bothered by the fact that so many of America's most prized classics lack female characters, the author took a stray reference in *Moby Dick* and wove a new story. Growing up in Massachusetts, young Una loves the sea and cuts her hair, dons a pair of pants and signs up as a cabin boy on a whaling ship. She meets Ahab and becomes the wife of a prosperous whaling captain, a woman who spends a fair amount of time waiting for her husband to return from the sea. Fiction. 668 pages

The Alchemist by Paulo Coelho

This inspirational fable is a charming tale of Santiago, an Andalusian shepherd boy who dreams of a treasure in Egypt and leaves Spain to follow his dream. Reaching Egypt, Santiago has a fateful encounter with an alchemist who offers the traveler self-enlightenment and spiritual understanding. Magical, wise and gentle, this is a memorable read. Fiction. 197 pages

Alias Grace by Margaret Atwood

Margaret Atwood takes us back in time and into the life and mind of Grace Marks, who has been convicted for her involvement in the vicious murders of her employer and his housekeeper and mistress. Some believe Grace is innocent; others think her evil or insane. Dr. Simon Jordan, an up-and-coming expert in the burgeoning field of mental illness, is engaged by a group of reformers and spiritualists to investigate. Atwood mines the often convoluted relationships between men and women and between the affluent and those without position in this captivating and disturbing novel. Fiction. 468 pages

All Over but the Shoutin' by Rick Bragg

When Bragg won the Pulitzer Prize in 1996 he decided to take a long look at his life. He never forgot his mother's many sacrifices to protect and provide for her three sons against the backdrop of a dirt-poor Southern existence with a drunken, abusive father who came and went from their lives. Biography & Memoir. 329 pages

All the Bright Places by Jennifer Niven – **ONE BOOK/ONE GLENDALE for Teens 2015**

Told in alternating voices, when Theodore Finch and Violet Markey meet on the ledge of the bell tower at school--both teetering on the edge--it's the beginning of an unlikely relationship, a journey to discover the 'natural wonders' of the state of Indiana, and two teens' desperate desire to heal and save one another. Young Adult Fiction. 326 pages

All the Light We Cannot See by Anthony Doerr

A blind French girl on the run from the German occupation and a German orphan-turned-Resistance tracker struggle with their respective beliefs after meeting on the Brittany coast. 2015 Pulitzer Prize for Fiction. Historical Fiction. 531 pages.

The Almost Moon by Alice Sebold

For years Helen Knightly has given her life to others: to her haunted mother, to her enigmatic father, to her husband and now grown children. When she finally crosses a terrible boundary, her life comes rushing in at her in a way she never could have imagined. Unfolding over the next 24 hours, this searing, fast-paced novel explores the complex ties between mothers and daughters, wives and lovers, the meaning of devotion, and the line between love and hate. Fiction. 291 pages

American Born Chinese by Gene Luen Yang

A tour-de-force by rising indy comics star Gene Yang, American Born Chinese tells the story of three apparently unrelated characters: Jin Wang, who moves to a new neighborhood with his family only to discover that he's the only Chinese-American student at his new school; the powerful Monkey King, subject of one of the oldest and greatest Chinese fables; and Chin-Kee, a personification of the ultimate negative Chinese stereotype, who is ruining his cousin Danny's life with his yearly visits. Their lives and stories come together with an unexpected twist in this action-packed modern fable. Finalist for Young People's Literature; Winner, 2007 Eisner Award for Best Graphic Album; Winner, 2007 Michael L Printz Award. Graphic Novel. Young Adult. 233 pages

Angela's Ashes by Frank McCourt

"Worse than the ordinary miserable childhood is the miserable Irish childhood," writes Frank McCourt in this memoir of his own childhood. Colorfully and painfully told, often with great humor. 1997 Pulitzer Prize for Biography or Autobiography; 1996 National Book Critics Circle Award. Biography & Memoir. 363 pages

The Appeal by John Grisham

When a jury returns a \$41 million verdict against a chemical company accused of dumping cancer-causing waste in a town's water supply the reader thinks that good has triumphed. When the jury award goes to appeal the company tries to "stack the deck" by getting a judge elected who will vote in its favor. An old hand at writing bestsellers, Grisham, nevertheless, received critical praise for his suspense and fascinating characterizations. Fiction. 358 pages

Arcadia by Lauren Groff

In the fields of western New York State in the 1970s, a few dozen idealists set out to live off the land, founding what would become a commune centered on the grounds of a decaying mansion called Arcadia House. Arcadia follows this romantic, rollicking, and tragic utopian dream from its hopeful start through its heyday and after. Arcadia's inhabitants include Handy, a musician and the group's charismatic leader; Astrid, a midwife; Abe, a master carpenter; Hannah, a baker and historian; and Abe and Hannah's only child, the book's protagonist, Bit, who is born soon after the commune is created. Fiction. 298 pages

The Art of Hearing Heartbeats by Jan-Philipp Sendker

When a successful New York lawyer suddenly disappears without a trace, neither his wife nor his daughter Julia has any idea where he might be...until they find a love letter he wrote many years ago, to a Burmese woman they have never heard of. Intent on solving the mystery and coming to terms with her father's past, Julia decides to travel to the village where the woman lived. There she uncovers a tale of unimaginable hardship, resilience, and passion that will reaffirm the reader's belief in the power of love to move mountains. Fiction. 394 pages

The Art of Racing in the Rain by Garth Stein – **ONE BOOK/ONE GLENDALE 2015**

Those looking for a cheerful read will enjoy this story of Enzo, a lab/terrier mix who narrates this story of his life with his best friend, race car driver Denny Swift. Love, despair, redemption and danger all mix in this delightful read with a dog who teaches people how to be human. Fiction. 321 pages

As I Lay Dying by William Faulkner

Faulkner drafted this story, broken into 59 separate monologues by 15 characters, in six weeks. Addie Bundren was promised that she would be buried with her family in the town of Jefferson, Mississippi. The tale of the arrival and journey of her body on its way to be buried is told without narrative or character description. Classic Fiction. 267 pages

Astonish Me by Maggie Shipstead

For years Joan has been trying to forget her past, to find peace and satisfaction in her role as wife and mother. Few in her drowsy California suburb know her thrilling history: as a young American ballerina in Paris, she fell into a doomed, passionate romance with Soviet dance superstar Arslan Rusakov. After playing a leading role in his celebrated defection, Joan bowed out of the spotlight for good, heartbroken by Arslan and humbled by her own modest career. But when her son turns out to be a ballet prodigy, Joan is pulled back into a world she thought she'd left behind—a world of dangerous secrets, of Arslan, and of longing for what will always be just out of reach. Fiction. 253 pages

Atonement by Ian McEwan

On an English country estate prior to World War II, a young couple—she, Cecilia, the wealthy daughter and he, Robbie, the son of the cleaning woman—share moments of intimacy and a lover's quarrel. Not understanding adult motives, Cecilia's young sister Briony claims that Robbie has committed a crime unrelated to her sister. Later, as the brutality of the war unfolds, Briony tries to atone for the lie and its consequences. Fiction. 351 pages

The Aviator's Wife by Melanie Benjamin

A fictionalized account of the life of Anne Morrow Lindbergh, wife of aviator Charles Lindbergh and an accomplished pilot in her own right. In the years that follow their headline-making wedding, despite her own major achievements, Anne is viewed merely as the aviator's wife. The fairy-tale life she once longed for brings heartbreak and hardships, ultimately pushing her to reconcile her need for love and her desire for independence, and to embrace, at last, life's infinite possibilities for change and happiness. Fiction. 402 pages

Balzac and the Little Chinese Seamstress by Sijie Dal

At the height of Mao's infamous Cultural Revolution, two boys are among hundreds of thousands exiled to the countryside for "re-education." The narrator and his best friend, Luo, guilty of being the sons of doctors, find themselves in a remote village, where their meager distractions include a violin and the beautiful daughter of the local tailor. It is when the two discover a hidden stash of Western classics in Chinese translation that their re-education takes its most surprising turn. Fiction. 184 pages

The Barbarian Nurseries by Hector Tobar -- **ONE BOOK/ONE GLENDALE 2013**

Los Angeles Times journalist Tobar presents an original story of modern Southern California. Maureen and Scott Torres-Thompson live with their children in upscale Laguna Rancho Estates. After they disappear, live-in maid Araceli takes their two boys on a journey through sprawling Los Angeles to locate their grandfather. When Scott and Maureen finally return, they are devastated to learn that their boys are missing with an undocumented Mexican nanny and make a call that changes all their lives forever. Fiction. 422 pages

The Bean Trees by Barbara Kingsolver

Growing up in rural Kentucky, Marietta Greer had two goals: avoid getting pregnant and escape Kentucky. Headed west in an old Volkswagen she finds herself in Arizona with a baby, literally dropped into her arms in Oklahoma, and a car that has run out of gas. In Tucson she finds friendship and a home with other exiles. Kingsolver's first novel is a story of fear, flight and the meaning of home. Fiction. 232 pages

Beautiful Ruins by Jess Walter

The story begins in 1962. On a rocky patch of the sun-drenched Italian coastline, a young innkeeper, chest-deep in daydreams, looks out over the incandescent waters of the Ligurian Sea and spies an apparition: a tall, thin woman, a vision in white, approaching him on a boat. She is an actress, he soon learns, an American starlet, and she is dying. And the story begins again today, half a world away, when an elderly Italian man shows up on a movie studio's back lot, searching for the mysterious woman he last saw at his hotel decades earlier. What unfolds is a dazzling, yet deeply human, roller coaster of a novel, spanning 50 years and nearly as many lives. Fiction. 337 pages

Bee Season by Myla Goldberg

Eliza Naumann, a seemingly unremarkable nine-year-old, expects never to fit into her gifted family: her autodidact father, Saul, absorbed in his study of Jewish mysticism; her brother, Aaron, the vessel of his father's spiritual ambitions; and her brilliant but distant lawyer-mom, Miriam. But when Eliza sweeps her school and district spelling bees in quick succession, Saul takes it as a sign that she is destined for greatness. As she rises from classroom obscurity to the blinding lights and outsized expectations of the National Bee, Eliza's small pains and large joys are finely wrought and deeply felt. Not merely a coming-of-age story, Goldberg's first novel delicately examines the unraveling fabric of one family. Fiction. 275 pages

Bel Canto by Ann Patchett

A ragtag group takes over an embassy in an unnamed South American country just as a soprano is about to launch into song and entertain the embassy's guest of honor, a Japanese industrialist. Based loosely on a real event, this magical novel has hostages and terrorists bonding in the most civilized ways. Fiction. 318 pages

The Bell Jar by Sylvia Plath

A vulnerable young girl wins a dream assignment on a big-time New York fashion magazine and finds herself plunged into a nightmare. An autobiographical account of Plath's own mental breakdown and suicide attempt, *The Bell Jar* is more than a confessional novel, it is a comic but painful statement of what happens to a woman's aspirations in a society that refuses to take them seriously... a society that expects electroshock to cure the despair of a sensitive, questioning young artist whose search for identity becomes a terrifying descent toward madness. Classic Fiction. 264 pages

Billy Lynn's Long Halftime Walk by Ben Fountain

Unfolding over the course of one Thanksgiving Day, this novel follows Bravo Company, the eight survivors of a savage clash with Iraqi insurgents, on the last leg of their government-sponsored "Victory Tour" in a witty and ironic sendup of middle America, Fox News politics, and, of all things, football. Texan Billy Lynn is the 19-year-old hero who learns about life and himself on his visit home to his family, and the palpable camaraderie between soldiers ground the book. Fiction. 307 pages

The Birth House by Ami McKay

An arresting portrait of the struggles that women faced for control of their own bodies, *The Birth House* is the story of Dora Rare, the first daughter in five generations of Rares. As apprentice to the outspoken Acadian midwife Miss Babineau, Dora learns to assist the women of an isolated Nova Scotian village through infertility, difficult labors, breech births, unwanted pregnancies, and unfulfilling sex lives. Historical Fiction. 385 pages

The Birth of Venus by Sarah Dunant

Blending fiction and fact and set in tumultuous 15th century Florence, this is the story of a young upper-class woman constrained by the society of the day. A historical romance lush with storylines about art and conspiracy, this is a seductive and imaginative novel. Historical Fiction. 403 pages

Blind Assassin by Margaret Atwood

Iris Chase has been waiting fifty years to reveal what led to her sister's suicide. This saga, a novel within a novel, tells the story of a well-to-do Canadian family haunted by family problems and secrets. Grand storytelling on a grand level. Fiction. 521 pages

Blink: The Power of Thinking Without Thinking by Malcolm Gladwell

Believing that spontaneous decisions are just as valid as methodically planned ones, Gladwell's bestselling book gives examples of successful spontaneous thinking from music, medicine and advertising. Entertaining and thought-provoking ideas from an author who asks the reader to look at how we use our own intuition. Nonfiction. 296 pages

Bonesetter's Daughter by Amy Tan

Divided into three parts, this is the story of two Chinese women: Ruth, a self-sufficient Chinese-American woman with relationship problems and her mother LuLing, who has dementia, and is forgetting the family history. Reading the story is like looking into a carved ivory ball that has other balls within and the book reminds us that the memory keeps and sometimes hides. Fiction. 353 pages

The Book of Ruth by Jane Hamilton

Pegged the loser in a small-town family that doesn't have much going for it in the first place, Ruth Dahl grows up in the shadow of her brilliant brother, trying to hold her own in a world of poverty and hard edges. Matt's brain is his ticket out of Honey Creek. Ruth, without options, cleaves instead to her tough, half-crazy mother, May, and eventually to Ruby, the sweet but slightly deranged young man she loves, marries, and supports. When the precarious household erupts in violence, Ruth is the only one who can piece their story together—and she gets at the truth in a manner at once ferocious, hilarious, and heartbreaking. Fiction. 328 pages

The Book of Unknown Americans by Cristina Henríquez

When fifteen-year-old Maribel Rivera sustains a terrible injury, the Riveras leave behind a comfortable life in Mexico and risk everything to come to the United States so that Maribel can have the care she needs. Once they arrive, it's not long before Maribel attracts the attention of Mayor Toro, the son of one of their new neighbors, who sees a kindred spirit in this beautiful, damaged outsider. Their love story sets in motion events that will have profound repercussions for everyone involved. Fiction. 289 pages.

The Book Thief by Marcus Zusak

Set during World War II in Germany, the novel is the story of Liesel Meminger, a foster girl living outside of Munich. Liesel scratches out a meager existence for herself by stealing when she encounters something she can't resist—books. With the help of her accordion-playing foster father, she learns to read and shares her stolen books with her neighbors during bombing raids as well as with the Jewish man hidden in her basement before he is marched to Dachau. This is an unforgettable story about the ability of books to feed the soul. Winner of the Michael L. Printz Award for excellence in young adult literature, 2007. Fiction. Young Adult. 552 pages

Bossypants by Tina Fey

Before Liz Lemon, before "Weekend Update," before "Sarah Palin," Tina Fey was just a young girl with a dream: a recurring stress dream that she was being chased through a local airport by her middle-school gym teacher. She also had a dream that one day she would be a comedian on TV. She has seen both these dreams come true. Tina Fey reveals all, and proves what we've all suspected: you're no one until someone calls you bossy. Biography & Memoir. 275 pages

Botany of Desire: A Plant's Eye View of the World by Michael Pollan

A journalist focuses on the relationship between humans and four everyday plants--the apple, the tulip, the potato and marijuana. Plant and human history commingle in this surprising and engaging book. Nonfiction. 271 pages

The Boys in the Boat: Nine Americans and Their Epic Quest for Gold at the 1936 Berlin Olympics

by Daniel James Brown

It was an unlikely quest from the start. With a team composed of the sons of loggers, shipyard workers, and farmers, the University of Washington's eight-oar crew team was never expected to defeat the elite teams of the East Coast and Great Britain, yet they did, going on to shock the world by defeating the German team rowing for Adolf Hitler. The emotional heart of the tale lies with Joe Rantz, a teenager without family or prospects, who rows not only to regain his shattered self-regard but also to find a real place for himself in the world. Nonfiction. 404 pages

Bridge of Sighs by Richard Russo

Louis Charles ("Lucy") Lynch has spent all his 60 years in upstate Thomaston, New York, married to the same woman, Sarah, for 40 of them, their son now a grown man. Lucy and Sarah are preparing for a once-in-a-lifetime trip to Italy, where his oldest friend, a renowned painter, has exiled himself far from anything they'd known in childhood. *Bridge of Sighs* is classic Russo, coursing with small-town rhythms and the claims of family. Fiction. 641 pages

The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao by Junot Diaz

Oscar is a sweet but disastrously overweight ghetto nerd who—from the New Jersey home he shares with his old world mother and rebellious sister—dreams of becoming the Dominican J.R.R. Tolkien and, most of all, finding love. But Oscar may never get what he wants. Blame the fukú—a curse that has haunted Oscar's family for generations, following them on their epic journey from Santo Domingo to the USA. 2008 Pulitzer Prize for Fiction. 2008 National Book Critics Circle Award. Fiction. 339 pages.

Buddha in the Attic by Julie Otsuka

This is the second book by our 2007 One Book/One Glendale author. With no central characters, this story of Japanese picture brides who have been matched with Japanese men living in California is narrated by a first-person chorus of women's voices. Voyaging across the Pacific, meeting the men whom they have never seen, taking up lives that are totally unfamiliar and suffering discrimination—the experiences are mostly bitter, but sometimes sweet. Historical Fiction. 129 pages

Burnt House by Faye Kellerman

Kellerman's signature characters, Orthodox Jewish wife Rina Lazarus and LAPD detective Peter Decker, are back in this solid police procedural about two murders that take place years apart, yet the bodies are found near each other. A page turner for mystery lovers. Mystery. 438 pages

The Call of the Wild by Jack London

Abducted from his comfortable California home, Buck the Saint Bernard Shepherd mix is sold as a sled dog during the Alaska/Yukon gold rush. Learning to survive the elements and the cruel people who control his life, Buck becomes the lead sled dog and then reverts to his canine roots. Originally published in 1903, this classic continues to be a compelling story and a great read. Classic Fiction. 133 pages

Cane River by Lita Tademy

Four generations of women born into slavery along the Cane River in Louisiana are chronicled in this hundred year family saga. The novel explores the resilient women, the intricate relationships between slaves and slave owners and the provocative issues of class and racism in the African-American community. Vividly told, the novel captures some of the history of the author's ancestors. Historical Fiction. 418 pages

Cannery Row by John Steinbeck

Reading *Cannery Row* is to experience really great writing. Set during the Great Depression, this slight novel was originally published in 1948. Residents of a Monterey avenue live on the fringe of society—poor, but happy—and coalesce around a marine biologist named Doc. This book just rings with great characters and terrific storytelling. Steinbeck won the Nobel Prize for literature. Classic Fiction. 196 pages

A Civil Action by Jonathan Harr

This compelling and true story of a quest by a young lawyer to secure damages from two corporate giants for allegedly polluting the water in a Boston suburb will be especially enjoyed by readers who like courtroom drama. Characters come to life in this page-turner. Nonfiction. 502 pages

Cleopatra: A Life by Stacy Schiff

Cleopatra was the last queen of Egypt. Her palace shimmered with onyx, garnets, and gold but was richer still in political and sexual intrigue. Above all else, Cleopatra was a shrewd strategist and an ingenious negotiator. Though her life spanned fewer than 40 years, it reshaped the contours of the ancient world. In a masterly return to the classical sources, Stacy Schiff boldly separates fact from fiction to rescue the magnetic queen whose death ushered in a new world order. Biography & Memoir. 368 pages

The Color of Water: A Black Man's Tribute to His White Mother by James McBride

This unique and moving story, told by her son, is about a Jewish woman raised in the South who moves to New York, marries twice, to African-American men, and raises 12 children. Poverty and racism cannot mar the great will of Ruth McBride Jordan and her desire to give her children a good life. A terrific book. Biography & Memoir. 291 pages

The Corrections by Jonathan Franzen

This sprawling novel about the Lamberts, a modern American family, contrasts the lives of the Midwestern parents, with their simple values, with their hip and troubled adult children. A tragicomic tour-de-force. 2001 National Book Award. Fiction. 566 pages

The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time by Mark Haddon

An autistic teenager, who does not like to be touched and is unable to decipher the emotions of others, tries to solve a mystery. Unusual and understated, this is an insightful story of a boy trying to navigate his own world and the world around him. Fiction. 226 pages

Cutting for Stone by Abraham Verghese

In a 1954 Ethiopian hospital twin boys, conjoined at the head, are born to Sister May Joseph Praise, a Carmelite nun from India. Their father, surgeon Thomas Stone, blames the boys for the death of the mother and flees Africa, while the boys remain at the hospital and are raised by doctors. Their lives sculpted by their experiences at the hospital and by growing up in Ethiopia, the boys grow up to eventually meet their father and their own fates. Imbued with an expansive story and a knowledge of medicine (the author is a doctor), this is a riveting saga. Fiction. 667 pages

Dark Places by Gillian Flynn

For a price Libby Day will reconnect with the players that murdered her mother and two sisters in "The Satan Sacrifice of Kinnakee, Kansas." Having testified that her brother Ben was the murderer on that fateful night twenty-five years ago, now she is not so sure as, piece by piece, the unimaginable truth emerges, and Libby finds herself right back where she started--on the run from a killer. Fiction. 349 pages

Daughter of Fortune by Isabel Allende

16-year-old Eliza Summers, the adopted daughter of British parents, leaves her family in Chile to follow her lover to 1849 Gold Rush California. Disguised as a boy so she can stowaway on a ship, she continues the ruse as she travels throughout the state, seeking her own fortune. This seductive novel has wonderful characters and a true sense of adventure. Historical Fiction. 399 pages

Devil in a Blue Dress by Walter Mosley

In this hardboiled story set in post-World War II Los Angeles, African American Easy Rawlins takes on the task of finding a missing woman and, in the process, finds his calling as a private detective. This powerful mystery is also a compelling look at race and gender. First title in the *Easy Rawlins* series. Mystery. 263 pages

Devil in the White City: Murder, Magic and Madness at the Fair that Changed America by Erik Larson

The Chicago World's Fair of 1893 was a triumph of imagination that debuted Juicy Fruit Gum, Cracker Jack, Shredded Wheat and more electric lights strung in one place than had ever been seen before. Architect Daniel Burnham brought together some of the nation's greatest architects to build a White City on the fair site. While everyone was focused on the fair, a doctor went on a killing spree—murdering more than 200 people in his own slaughterhouse. Momentum builds and the book balances beauty with terror. Nonfiction. 447 pages

Devil Wears Prada by Lauren Weisberger

For those who enjoy "chick lit." After graduating from Brown University with dreams of being a journalist, young and ill-dressed Andrea Sachs finds herself working for the very difficult editor of a fashion magazine. Fiction. 360 pages

Dewey: The Small-Town Library Cat Who Touched the World by Vicki Myron

The charming story of Dewey Readmore Books, the beloved library cat of Spencer, Iowa. Found stuffed into the returned book slot at the Spencer Public Library by library director Vicki Myron, Dewey won her heart, and the hearts of the staff, by pulling himself up and hobbling on frostbitten feet to nudge each of them in a gesture of thanks and love. For the next 19 years, he never stopped charming the people of Spencer. Nonfiction. 297 pages

The Dinner by Herman Koch

It's a summer's evening in Amsterdam, and two couples meet at a fashionable restaurant for dinner. Between mouthfuls of food and over the polite scrapings of cutlery, the conversation remains a gentle hum of polite discourse. But behind the empty words, terrible things need to be said, and with every forced smile and every new course, the knives are being sharpened. Each couple has a 15-year-old son. The two boys are united by their accountability for a single horrific act; an act that has triggered a police investigation and shattered the comfortable, insulated worlds of their families. Fiction. 292 pages

Distant Land of My Father by Bo Caldwell

Her world is turned upside down when World War II intrudes on the life of a young girl growing up in Shanghai with her beautiful mother and wheeler-dealer father. Moving to South Pasadena, the girl forgives her father's personal demons. Vivid descriptions of life in China and a local setting make this a very readable epic story. Historical Fiction. 378 pages

The Divorce Papers by Susan Rieger

Sometimes hilarious, sometimes heartbreaking debut novel about a high-profile, messy divorce, and the endearingly cynical young lawyer dragooned into handling it, told solely via personal correspondence, office memos, emails, articles, and legal paper. Fiction. 461 pages

Dogs of Babel by Carolyn Parkhurst

When Lexy mysteriously falls out of a tree, the only witness to her death is a dog named Lorelei. Lexy's husband, a linguistics professor, is convinced that if he can teach Lorelei to talk, he will learn the truth about Lexy's death. With its quirky premise and some odd twists and turns, this debut novel offers much to think about. Fiction. 264 pages

Down the Nile: Alone in a Fisherman's Skiff by Rosemary Mahoney

Despite cultural and local traditions that are obstacles to a dream, writer and experienced traveler Mahoney is determined to take a solo rowboat trip down the Nile River. She takes readers with her as she describes the history, heat, crocodiles and prejudice against women. Balanced with this are experiences of goodwill and her reflections on the river travelers who preceded her. Witty and vivid writing. Nonfiction. 273 pages

Dreams of Joy by Lisa See

Sequel to *Shanghai Girls*, this new novel continues the story of sisters May and Pearl and Pearl's daughter Joy. Angry at the secrets withheld from her, a defiant Joy runs away to Shanghai to look for the father she never met and does not recognize the dangers of Red China. Determined to save her, Pearl leaves on her own perilous journey to China. Wonderful storytelling from a favorite book group author. Historical Fiction. 354 pages

Drowning Ruth by Christina Schwarz

In the winter of 1919, a young mother named Mathilda Neumann drowns beneath the ice of a rural Wisconsin lake. The shock of her death dramatically changes the lives of her daughter, troubled sister, and husband. . . . Told in the voices of several of the main characters and skipping back and forth in time, the narrative gradually and tantalizingly reveals the dark family secrets and the unsettling discoveries that lead to the truth of what actually happened the night of the drowning. Historical Fiction. 338 pages

Eat, Pray, Love: One Woman's Search for Everything Across Italy, India and Indonesia

by Elizabeth Gilbert

After a painful divorce, a woman in her early thirties takes a soul-searching journey of self-discovery. Visiting three different countries, she experiences and savors life in unexpected ways and creates a travelogue filled with great candor and wonderful anecdotes. Engagingly written in a warm and chatty manner. Biography & Memoir. 334 pages

Eats, Shoots & Leaves by Lynne Truss

We all know the basics of punctuation. Or do we? Through sloppy usage and low standards on the Internet, in email, and now text messages, we have made proper punctuation an endangered species. Here, former editor Lynne Truss dares to say, in her delightfully urbane, witty, and very English way, that it is time to look at our commas and semicolons and see them as the wonderful and necessary things they are. Nonfiction. 209 pages

The Elegance of the Hedgehog by Muriel Barbery

Told in alternating chapters, this is an unlikely story of the relationship between a French concierge and the precocious 12-year-old who lives in her Paris apartment building. Each hide their true personalities but bring out the best in each other. Much to discuss in this very unique and quietly philosophical story. Fiction. 325 pages

Empire Falls by Richard Russo

With compassionate scrutiny and the ability to evoke the cherished hopes and dreams of ordinary people, the author captures a wonderful story about the misfits and misguided good citizens of a crumbling Maine mill town. Lively characters and an involved plot. 2002 Pulitzer Prize. Fiction. 483 pages

Ender's Game by Orson Scott Card

In order to develop a secure defense against a hostile alien race's next attack, government agencies breed child geniuses and train them as soldiers. A brilliant young boy, Andrew "Ender" Wiggin is drafted to the orbiting Battle School for rigorous military training. Growing up in an artificial community of young soldiers, Ender suffers greatly from isolation, rivalry from his peers, pressure from the adult teachers, and an unsettling fear of the alien invaders. Ender's two older siblings are every bit as unusual as he is, but in very different ways. Between the three of them lie the abilities to remake a world, if that world survives. Science Fiction. Young Adult. 324 pages

The End of Your Life Book Club by Will Schwalbe

This is the inspiring true story of a son and his mother, who start a "book club" that brings them together as her life comes to a close. "What are you reading?" Will Schwalbe asks his mother, Mary Anne, as they sit in the waiting room of the Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center. Over the next two years, Will and Mary Anne carry on conversations that are both wide-ranging and deeply personal, prompted by an eclectic array of books and a shared passion for reading. Biography & Memoir. 336 pages

Enrique's Journey by Sonia Nazario – **ONE BOOK/ONE GLENDALE 2008**

Originally a Pulitzer Prize-winning *Los Angeles Times* series, this is a true story. Many years after Enrique's mother has left Honduras to find work and send money home, teenage Enrique decides to join her and takes a perilous trip through Mexico to illegally enter the United States. The author risked her own safety, riding on top of speeding trains, to retrace Enrique's journey and report the story. This compelling work of Nonfiction illuminates the controversial topic of immigration and highlights a human tragedy. Nonfiction. 299 pages

Ethan Frome by Edith Wharton

A lonely New Englander, his wife and the cousin whom he loves share the tragic consequences of romance gone awry. The cold and barren setting echoes the deeply affecting story, which will keep the reader thinking long after the book is finished. Classic Fiction. 99 pages

Everything I Never Told You by Celeste Ng

A teenage girl goes missing and is later found to have drowned in a nearby lake, and suddenly a once tight-knit family unravels in unexpected ways. As the daughter of a college professor and his stay-at-home wife in a small Ohio town in the 1970s, Lydia Lee is already unwittingly part of the greater societal changes going on all around her. But Lydia suffers from pressure that has nothing to do with tuning out and turning on. Her father is an American born of first-generation Chinese immigrants, and his ethnicity, and hers, make them conspicuous in any setting. Her mother is white, and their interracial marriage raises eyebrows and some intrusive charges of miscegenation. Fiction. 326 pages.

Fall On Your Knees by Ann-Marie MacDonald

This sprawling saga of five generations of a Canadian family from Cape Breton, Nova Scotia is an epic tale of family history and family secrets. Set in the early 20th century and focusing on four sisters and their relationships with each other and their father, this story shifts from a coal mining community to the battlefields of World War I to New York City in the 1920s. Fiction. 508 pages

Falling Leaves: The Memoir of an Unwanted Chinese Daughter by Adeline Yen Mah

Born in 1937 in a Chinese city 1,000 miles north of Shanghai, Adeline Yen Mah was raised in an affluent home during a time of great political and cultural upheaval. This memoir traces the life of Mah, whose mother died in childbirth and who is emotionally abused by her cruel father and Eurasian stepmother. Mah struggles against appalling circumstances and then escapes first to Hong Kong and then to the United States, where she becomes a doctor. Biography & Memoir. 278 pages

Fast Food Nation: The Dark Side of the All-American Meal by Eric Schlosser

In 2001, *Fast Food Nation* was published to critical acclaim and became an international bestseller. The exposé revealed how the fast food industry has altered the landscape of America, widened the gap between rich and poor, fueled an epidemic of obesity, and transformed food production throughout the world. It inspires readers to look beneath the surface of our food system, consider its impact on society and, most of all, think for themselves. Nonfiction. 356 pages

The Fault in Our Stars by John Green

Despite the tumor-shrinking medical miracle that has bought her a few years, Hazel has never been anything but terminal, her final chapter inscribed upon diagnosis. But when a gorgeous plot twist named Augustus Waters suddenly appears at Cancer Kid Support Group, Hazel's story is about to be completely rewritten. Insightful, bold, irreverent, and raw, *The Fault in Our Stars* is award-winning-author John Green's most ambitious and heartbreaking work yet, brilliantly exploring the funny, thrilling, and tragic business of being alive and in love. Fiction. Young Adult. 318 pages

A Fine Balance by Rohinton Mistry

Set in Mumbai, India in 1975 during a period called The Emergency, when the government cracked down on civil liberties during a state of emergency, this is the story of four strangers of diverse backgrounds (a spirited widow, a young student and two tailors) who are thrust together and unexpectedly bond. Compared to a Dickens novel because of its epic sweep and realism, this involving story shows how the human spirit endures, even in difficult times. Fiction. 603 pages

Five People You Meet in Heaven by Mitch Albom

This inspirational book, part melodrama and part parable, weaves together three stories about an 83-year-old maintenance man. Combining stories of the man's early life, death and afterlife, the story is a compelling look at the meaning of life. Fiction. 196 pages

For All the Tea in China: How England Stole the World's Favorite Drink and Changed History by Sarah Rose

In the dramatic story of one of the greatest acts of corporate espionage ever committed, Sarah Rose recounts the fascinating, unlikely circumstances surrounding a turning point in economic history. By the middle of the 19th century, the British East India Company faced the loss of its monopoly on the fantastically lucrative tea trade with China, forcing it to make the drastic decision of sending Scottish botanist Robert Fortune to steal the crop from deep within China and bring it back to British plantations in India. Fortune's danger-filled odyssey reads like adventure fiction, revealing a long-forgotten chapter of the past and the wondrous origins of a seemingly ordinary beverage. Nonfiction. 259 pages

For One More Day by Mitch Albom

For Mitch Albom fans. What if you could spend one more day with a loved one whom you have lost? The author asks this question in the heartwarming and inspirational work. A short read. Fiction. 197 pages

Freedom by Jonathan Franzen

The author of the much admired *The Corrections* again mines the American family with a story of Walter and Patty Berglund, two urban homesteaders who move to a crumbling downtown in 1980s Minnesota. The much-admired golden couple diminishes in the face of family problems, unrequited love, sex, politics and the freedom they have to do as they wish. Brilliant and involving. Fiction. 562 pages

Galileo's Daughter by Dava Sobel

Inspired by a long fascination with Galileo, and by the remarkable surviving letters of Galileo's daughter, a cloistered nun, this is a biography unlike any other of Galileo. It also presents a stunning portrait of a person hitherto lost to history, described by her father as "a woman of exquisite mind, singular goodness, and most tenderly attached to me." Nonfiction. 420 pages

Ghettoside: A True Story of Murder in America by Jill Leovy

A kaleidoscopic story of the quintessential, but mostly ignored, American murder—a "ghettoside" killing, one young black man slaying another—and a brilliant and driven cadre of detectives whose creed is to pursue justice for forgotten victims at all costs. *Ghettoside* is a fast-paced narrative of a devastating crime, an intimate portrait of detectives and a community bonded in tragedy, and a surprising new lens into the great subject of why murder happens in our cities—and how the epidemic of killings might yet be stopped. Nonfiction. 366 pages.

Gilead by Marilynne Robinson

Seventy-seven-year-old John Ames, a preacher in a small Iowa town, gives a mesmerizing account of his own life and family history in the form of a letter to his young son. Written in simple, shimmering prose, this quiet and powerful novel won the 2005 Pulitzer Prize for Fiction. Fiction. 247 pages

Girl With A Pearl Earring by Tracy Chevalier

Forced by economic circumstances to take a maid's job in the house of the Dutch artist Vermeer, young Griet stands as an outsider, observing the tumultuous life of a family in 1664 Holland. When the artist notices her intelligence and sense of color, she secretly becomes his assistant and almost ruins her own reputation. An

absorbing and delicate story that gives a real sense of the atmosphere and behavior of that time and place. Historical Fiction. 233 pages

The Girl With the Dragon Tattoo by Steig Larsson

The first book of the Millennium trilogy, this absorbing and unsettling mystery is about a muckraking journalist and his unlikely companion, a pierced and tattooed computer hacker, who unravel a complicated and devious family story. Powerful and compelling, this worldwide bestseller has two popular sequels. Mystery. 590 pages

The Girl Who Played With Fire by Steig Larsson

On the eve of publisher Mikael Blomkvist's story about sex trafficking between Eastern Europe and Sweden, two investigating reporters are murdered. And even more shocking for Mikael Blomkvist: the fingerprints found on the murder weapon belong to Lisbeth Salander—the troubled, wise-beyond-her-years genius hacker who came to his aid years before. Mystery. 630 pages

The Giver by Lois Lowry

A 12-year-old boy who lives in a “Utopia,” where the lack of painful emotions, disease, hunger and war have been traded for rigid rules and control over everyone, discovers the terrible truth about his community. Compelling and thought-provoking. Good choice for teens, but great discussion for adults. Fiction. Children’s. 179 pages

The Glass Castle by Jeannette Walls

The daughter of eccentric and tempestuous parents tells a heart-breaking and page-turning story of growing up in a wildly dysfunctional family. Original and darkly humorous, this is a triumphant autobiography with an author who never claims to be “poor pitiful me.” Biography & Memoir. 288 pages

God of Small Things by Arundhati Roy

Told from the perspective of 7-year-old twins, this Indian novel focuses on two tragic events in 1969—the drowning of the twins’ cousin and the murder of an Untouchable carpenter. Moving back and forth through time, the author reveals the “small things” that inhabit her characters’ lives and furnish the dwellings that cannot protect them. Fiction. 321 pages

The Golem and the Jinni by Helene Wecker

The story of two supernatural creatures who appear mysteriously in 1899 New York. Chava is a golem, a creature made of clay, brought to life by a strange man who dabbles in dark Kabbalistic magic. Ahmad is a jinni, a being of fire, born in the ancient Syrian Desert. Trapped in an old copper flask by a Bedouin wizard centuries ago, he is released accidentally by a tinsmith in a Lower Manhattan shop. Fiction. 486 pages

Gone Girl by Gillian Flynn

On the morning of his fifth wedding anniversary, Nick's wife Amy suddenly disappears. The police immediately suspect Nick. Amy's friends reveal that she was afraid of him, that she kept secrets from him. He swears it isn't true. A police examination of his computer shows strange searches. He says they aren't his. And then there are the persistent calls on his mobile phone. So what really did happen to Nick's beautiful wife? Fiction. 419 pages

The Graveyard Book by Neil Gaiman

Nobody Owens, known to his friends as Bod, is a normal boy. He would be completely normal if he didn't live in a sprawling graveyard, being raised and educated by ghosts, with a solitary guardian who belongs to neither the world of the living nor of the dead. If Bod leaves the graveyard, then he will come under attack from the man Jack, who has already killed Bod's family. 2009 Winner Newbery Medal Award. Fiction. Children’s. 313 pages

The Great Gatsby by F. Scott Fitzgerald

This classic novel captures the spirit of the Jazz Age and all its over-the-top excess that comes crashing down. Self-made and mysterious millionaire Jay Gatsby, deeply in love with Daisy Buchanan, the girl who marries

another man while Gatsby is away, tries to use his wealth to regain Daisy. Crisply written, short and tragic. Classic Fiction. 180 pages

The Greatest Generation by Tom Brokaw

While making a documentary on the anniversary of D-Day, veteran television reporter Tom Brokaw was flooded with emotion and his own memories of World War II. For the next 15 years he collected memories of people, at home and in the military, who defined the generation who came of age in the Depression and in the War. The 50 reminiscences are engrossing and food for thought about the value of "ordinary people." Nonfiction. 412 pages

Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel Pie Society by Mary Ann Shaffer and Annie Burrows

During World War II when the island of Guernsey, just south of England, was occupied by Germany, a group of islanders used the ruse of forming a reading club so they could get together. After the war, the story of the Society is told in letters, exchanged by its quirky members and a young writer who wants to know more about their adventures. Wonderfully original. Historical Fiction. 290 pages

Half Broke Horses by Jeannette Walls

Author Walls follows her very popular *The Glass Castle* with this "true life novel" about her spirited, no-nonsense grandmother. Lily Casey Smith helped break horses at the age of six, taught in a frontier town, learned to fly a plane, ran a ranch in Arizona and raised two children—one of them the very memorable mother in *The Glass Castle*. New York Times 10 Best Books 2009. Fiction. 272 pages

The Happiness Project by Gretchen Rubin

Gretchen Rubin had an epiphany one rainy afternoon. "The days are long, but the years are short," she realized. "Time is passing, and I'm not focusing enough on the things that really matter." In that moment, she decided to dedicate a year to her happiness project. In this lively and compelling account of that year, Rubin carves out her place alongside the authors of bestselling memoirs such as *Julie and Julia*, *The Year of Living Biblically*, and *Eat, Pray, Love*. With humor and insight, she chronicles her adventures during the 12 months she spent test-driving the wisdom of the ages, current scientific research, and lessons from popular culture about how to be happier. Nonfiction. 315 pages

The Heart is a Lonely Hunter by Carson McCullers

This classic story, which debuted in 1940, is the story of the deaf John Singer and the people he encounters in a 1930s Georgia mill town. Having lost his deaf companion, Singer becomes a confidant to the town's misfits—teenage girl Mick Kelley who dreams of becoming a musician; Benedict Mady Copeland, the town's idealistic African American doctor; Jake Blount, an alcoholic labor organizer; and Biff Branson, the owner of the local café. Despite the feelings of despair, there is a glimmer of hope in this beautifully written and continually appreciated novel. Classic Fiction. 359 pages

A Heartbreaking Work of Staggering Genius by Dave Eggers

Although fiction, this mostly true memoir is about the author's parents' death from cancer and the experiences he has raising his younger brother and running a magazine in San Francisco. Far from being a sentimental tear-jerker written to make money, this is a high octane and honest work that is told in a compelling way. Fiction. 437 pages

Helen of Pasadena by Lian Dolan

Helen Fairchild, who left college to marry a Pasadena socialite and spends her days volunteering, discovers that her "wonderful life" is in jeopardy when her cheating husband is killed at the Rose Parade and she must sell her beautiful home in the Arroyo, get a job, find ways of keeping her son in private school and make her way in the world. This humorous parody of Pasadena is a cheerful book with a happy ending. For everyone who knows Pasadena and for readers who want a good laugh. Fiction. 304 pages

The Help by Kathryn Stockett

This very popular much-to-discuss novel about black domestic servants working in white Southern households in the 1960s is deeply moving and very readable. The author creates extraordinary, nuanced characters whose

courage is palpable. Some critics thought it was unusual for a white author to write about African-American characters, who speak in dialect, but even the most critical have found this a very winning story. Fiction. 451 pages

The Hiding Place by Corrie ten Boom

Corrie ten Boom was a Dutch watchmaker who became a heroine of the Resistance, a survivor of Hitler's concentration camps, and one of the most remarkable evangelists of the twentieth century. In World War II she and her family risked their lives to help Jews and underground workers escape from the Nazis, and for their work they were tested in the infamous Nazi death camps. Only Corrie among her family survived to tell the story of how faith ultimately triumphs over evil. Nonfiction. 311 pages

History of Love by Nicole Kraus

This hauntingly beautiful novel weaves the stories of two people: Leo Gursky who lost not only his beloved girlfriend in the Holocaust, but also the book he wrote—which unbeknownst to him was published, but under a different title—and 14-year-old Alma Singer (named for a character in that book) who is trying to keep her family together. A book to be read slowly and savored. Fiction. 252 pages

Honeymoon with My Brother by Franz Wisner

This is the true story of Franz Wisner, a man who thought he had it all—a high profile career and the fiancé of his dreams—when suddenly, his life turned upside down. Just days before they were to be married, his fiancé called off the wedding. His large support network of family and friends decided Franz should have a wedding and a honeymoon anyway, there just wouldn't be a bride at the ceremony, and Franz' travel companion would be his brother, Kurt. The brothers decided to leave their old lives behind them and visited 53 countries for the next two years. Franz recounts this remarkable journey, during which he turned his heartbreak into an opportunity to learn about himself, the world, and the brother he hardly knew. Biography & Memoir. 274 pages

Hotel on the Corner of Bitter and Sweet by Jamie Ford

When Chinese-American Henry Lee, who has just lost his wife, hears that the belongings of Japanese immigrants who were interned during WWII have been found in the basement of a Seattle hotel, he starts to think about his youth. As the narrative shifts from 1986 to the 1940s he thinks about the Japanese girl he was forbidden to love by his Japanese-hating father and how she and her family were interned. Henry also reflects on how the distance between himself and his father is being duplicated by his distance from his own son. Historical Fiction. 290 pages

The Hours by Michael Cunningham

Three interwoven stories are all connected to Virginia Woolf, her life and her book *Mrs. Dalloway* in this entrancing and original novel. In alternating chapters we see the life and struggles of Ms. Woolf, the life of a 1949 California woman caught in an airless marriage and the life of a 1990s modern Greenwich Village woman who is preparing a party for a dying friend. The author marries the stories together and manages to find the interior lives of each character. 1999 Pulitzer Prize. Fiction. 229 pages

Housekeeping by Marilynne Robinson

This much acclaimed book tells the story of two orphaned sisters, Ruth and Lucille, who grow up in a series of homes with increasingly odd relatives (their grandmother, bumbling great aunts and their mother's sister) and struggle their way to adulthood. Loss, love, loneliness and longing permeate this modern classic. Fiction. 219 pages

The House of the Spirits by Isabel Allende

A luminous tapestry of three generations of the Trueba family, revealing both triumphs and tragedies. Here is patriarch Esteban, whose wild desires and political machinations are tempered only by his love for his ethereal

wife, Clara, a woman touched by an otherworldly hand. Their daughter, Blanca, whose forbidden love for a man Esteban has deemed unworthy infuriates her father, yet will produce his greatest joy: his granddaughter Alba, a beautiful, ambitious girl who will lead the family and their country into a revolutionary future. Fiction. 433 pages

The Hundred Secret Senses by Amy Tan

Focusing on the relationship between two half sisters, Chinese-born Kwan and Chinese-American younger sister Olivia, this story explores a familiar Amy Tan theme—family members at odds with each other. Although Kwan tries to introduce Olivia to Chinese culture, Olivia resists but discovers that she has absorbed much about Chinese superstitions and spirits. The story climaxes when the sisters travel to the village of their ancestors and learn that more than just ordinary senses are needed to truly experience the world. Fiction. 358 pages

The Hunger Games by Suzanne Collins

Every year, 12 boys and 12 girls are chosen to take part in the Hunger Games. Watched by the entire nation, this is action-packed reality TV at its most exciting — and most dangerous. Katniss Everdeen has grown up struggling to save the people close to her. Now she faces the biggest challenge of all — the fight for her life. Winning will make you famous. Losing means certain death. Fiction. Young Adult. 374 pages

The Husband's Secret by Liane Moriarty

Imagine that your husband wrote you a letter, to be opened after his death. Imagine, too, that the letter contains his deepest, darkest secret, something with the potential to destroy not just the life you built together, but the lives of others as well. Imagine, then, that you stumble across that letter while your husband is still very much alive. Cecilia Fitzpatrick has achieved it all; she is an incredibly successful businesswoman, a pillar of her small community, and a devoted wife and mother. Her life is as orderly and spotless as her home. But that letter is about to change everything, and not just for her: Rachel and Tess barely know Cecilia or each other, but they too are about to feel the earth-shattering repercussions of her husband's secret. Fiction. 445 pages

I Feel Bad About My Neck by Nora Ephron

A candid, hilarious look at women who are getting older and dealing with the tribulations of maintenance, menopause, empty nests, and life itself. The woman who brought us *When Harry Met Sally . . .*, *Sleepless in Seattle*, and *You've Got Mail*, discusses everything—from how much she hates her purse to how much time she spends attempting to stop the clock: the hair dye, the treadmill, the lotions and creams that promise to slow the aging process but never do. Oh, and she can't stand the way her neck looks. But mostly she speaks frankly and uproariously about life as a woman of a certain age. Nonfiction. 137 pages

Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks by Rebecca Skloot

Henrietta Lacks, a cancer-stricken African-American woman living in poverty, unknowingly becomes the source of an immortal line of cells whose ability to grow in the laboratory play a role in crucial scientific discoveries. Sympathetically telling the story of Henrietta's life and death, the book takes a look at the medical ethics of scientists and medical companies that made money from Lacks' cells but did not reimburse her family, which continued to live in poverty and poor health. Much to talk about. Biography & Memoir. 369 pages

The Infatuations by Javier Marías

Each day before work María Dolz stops at the same café. There she finds herself drawn to a couple who is also there every morning. Observing their seemingly perfect life helps her escape the listlessness of her own. But when the man is brutally murdered and María approaches the widow to offer her condolences, what began as mere observation turns into an increasingly complicated entanglement. Invited into the widow's home, she meets--and falls in love with--a man who sheds disturbing new light on the crime. As María recounts this story, we are given a murder mystery brilliantly encased in a metaphysical enquiry, a novel that grapples with questions of love and death, chance and coincidence, and above all, with the slippery essence of the truth and how it is told. Fiction. 337 pages

In the Garden of Beasts: Love, Terror, and an American Family in Hitler's Berlin by Erik Larson

A popular history about William Dodd, the professor who becomes the first ambassador to Hitler's Germany and moves his family to Berlin in 1933. Mild mannered Dodd witnesses the rise of the Third Reich with great

alarm, while his daughter is attracted to the parading Nazis and cheering crowds. As Dodd develops some spine and tries to notify the State Department about what is happening in Germany, the coming nightmare is ignored by the American government. Gripping narrative that asks provocative questions. Nonfiction. 448 pages

In the Time of the Butterflies by Julia Alvarez

Based on historical events, this story is about the three Mirabal sisters who try to help overthrow a dictatorship in the Dominican Republic and in the process become martyrs for a cause. Known as las mariposas (the butterflies), each sister is different and the characterizations are strong. The story starts slowly and builds to gripping intensity. Historical Fiction. 325 pages

Into the Wild by Jon Krakauer

What would possess a smart young man, recently graduated from college, to literally walk away from his life and possessions and wander into the wilds of Alaska, where his body was eventually found in 1992? Jon Krakauer, who wrote *Into Thin Air* about climbing Mt. Everest, movingly traces this true story from the young man's childhood to his efforts to survive and then his death. Nonfiction. 207 pages

Into Thin Air by Jon Krakauer

Mountain climbers ascending Mt. Everest confront the worst forces of nature and the selfish inclinations of their fellow climbers. Palpable with the physical effects of climbing to the top of the world, this page-turner is a tragedy waiting to happen. Nonfiction. 332 pages

An Innocent Man by John Grisham

Grisham's first work of Nonfiction reads like one of his novels. A small town Oklahoma baseball hero, down on his luck, is railroaded onto death row for crimes he did not commit. Shocking and enthralling. Nonfiction. 360 pages

The Invention of Wings by Sue Monk Kidd

Hetty "Handful" Grimke, an urban slave in early nineteenth century Charleston, yearns for life beyond the suffocating walls that enclose her within the wealthy Grimke household. The Grimke's daughter, Sarah, has known from an early age she is meant to do something large in the world, but she is hemmed in by the limits imposed on women. The novel is set in motion on Sarah's eleventh birthday, when she is given ownership of ten year old Handful, who is to be her handmaid. We follow their remarkable journeys over the next thirty five years, as both strive for a life of their own, dramatically shaping each other's destinies and forming a complex relationship marked by guilt, defiance, estrangement and the uneasy ways of love. Fiction. 258 pages.

Is This Tomorrow: A Novel by Caroline Leavitt

In 1956, divorced working-mom Ava Lark rents a house with her 12-year-old son, Lewis, in a Boston suburb. Lewis befriends the only other fatherless kids in the neighborhood: Jimmy and Rose. One afternoon, Jimmy goes missing, which alters the life of Ava, Rose, and Lewis. Fiction. 360 pages

The Jane Austen Book Club by Karen Joy Fowler

Five women and one man form a book group that will only read and discuss novels by Jane Austen. As the characters meet monthly, they not only debate the Austen characters and narratives, but also reveal their own lives and feelings. With good company and a happy ending, this is a great book group title. Fiction. 288 pages

John Adams by David McCullough

Overshadowed by both Washington and Jefferson, John Adams comes into his own in this wonderfully compelling biography of both the man and his delightful wife and full partner Abigail Adams. Not a history timeline weighted down by too much detail, this vibrantly written work focuses on Adams' role as president and his contributions to the Declaration of Independence and budding American politics and diplomacy. Biography & Memoir. 751 pages

Kindred by Octavia Butler

Dana, a modern African-American woman living in Altadena, California, is about to celebrate her 26th birthday when she is snatched from her home and transported to the Antebellum South where she has been

summoned to save a slave-owning white man. As Dana travels back and forth through time she discovers that this man will father a daughter who will become Dana's ancestor. Science Fiction. 287 pages

The Kitchen House by Kathleen Grissom

In 1790, Lavinia, a seven-year-old Irish orphan with no memory of her past, arrives on a tobacco plantation where she is put to work as an indentured servant with the kitchen house slaves. Though she becomes deeply bonded to her new family, Lavinia is also slowly accepted into the world of the big house, where the master is absent and the mistress battles opium addiction. As time passes she finds herself perilously straddling two very different worlds, and when loyalties are brought into question, dangerous truths are laid bare and lives are at risk. Fiction. 368 pages

The Kite Runner by Khaled Hosseini

Betrayal and redemption are two powerful themes in this stunning debut novel about a boy named Amir, son of a well-to-do Afghan merchant, who betrays his best friend, the servant boy Hassan. Amir and his father immigrate to America, but Amir cannot forget his friend. Learning that the Taliban have killed Hassan, the now adult Amir returns home to rescue Hassan's son. Great storytelling, surprising plot twists and indelible characters that truly come to life make this a very memorable story. Fiction. 372 pages

The Known World by Edward P. Jones

With its large cast of characters and shifting storylines, this complex book will reward the patient reader. Set twenty years before the Civil War, the novel tells the story of a little known part of the history of slavery—African Americans who owned slaves. 2004 Pulitzer Prize for Fiction. Historical Fiction. 388 pages

The Language of Flowers by Vanessa Diffenbaugh

The Victorian language of flowers was used to convey romantic expressions, but for Victoria Jones, it's been more useful in communicating grief, mistrust, and solitude. After a childhood spent in the foster-care system, she is unable to get close to anybody, and her only connection to the world is through flowers and their meanings. Now 18 and emancipated from the system, Victoria has nowhere to go and sleeps in a public park, where she plants a small garden of her own. Soon a local florist discovers her talents, and Victoria realizes she has a gift for helping others through the flowers she chooses for them. Fiction. 334 pages

Life of Pi by Yann Martel

After Pi survives a sinking ship in the Pacific Ocean he ends up adrift for 227 days in a large lifeboat that contains a 450-pound Bengal tiger, a skittish zebra, a vicious hyena and a lumbering orangutan. The story of these unlikely castaways sounds ridiculous, but the quirky and original tale is magical and hilarious. Fiction. 326 pages

The Light Between Oceans by M.L. Stedman

After four harrowing years on the Western Front, Tom Sherbourne returns to Australia and takes a job as the lighthouse keeper on Janus Rock, nearly half a day's journey from the coast. To this isolated island, where the supply boat comes once a season, Tom brings a young, bold, and loving wife, Isabel. Years later, after two miscarriages and one stillbirth, the grieving Isabel hears a baby's cries on the wind. A boat has washed up onshore carrying a dead man and a living baby. Fiction. 345 pages

Like Water for Chocolate by Laura Esquivel

Using magical realism, a combination of the ordinary and the supernatural, this is a story of love, passion and food. When Tita's mother says Tita cannot marry the young man she loves, he marries Tita's older sister so he can be near his beloved. Tita loves to cook, but her tears fall into the food and her emotions are transferred to the people who eat it. Each chapter begins with a recipe. Exquisite, tender and very different. Fiction. 245 pages

Little Bee by Chris Cleave

This dual narrative story of a 16-year-old Nigerian orphan and a well-off couple, whose lives collide when the couple, who might have stayed behind the walls of their vacation resort hotel instead go walking on the beach,

pivots on a secret plot point that is a life-changing moment for both the couple and the young woman they meet. Unique and captivating, this book is about refugees, survival, misjudging people and personal responsibility. Timely. Fiction. 271 pages

Little Women by Louisa Mae Alcott

The four March sisters—Amy, Beth, Jo and Meg—live in genteel poverty with their mother Marmee while their father is away during the Civil War. This American classic, a lively portrait of how one family lived in the 19th century, could be paired with a contemporary novel, *March* by Geraldine Brooks, which chronicles the life of Mr. March while he is absent from the family. Good choice for teens. Classic Fiction. 461 pages

Los Angeles Noir edited by Denise Hamilton – **ONE BOOK/ONE GLENDALE 2010**

Glendale author Denise Hamilton updates the classic crime genre with this collection of 17 contemporary noir short stories, each set in a different neighborhood of Los Angeles. The authors, including Michael Connelly, Patt Morrison, Naomi Hirahara and Hamilton herself, each give their special take on modern hardboiled mysteries. Mystery. 348 pages

Lost Symbol by Dan Brown

As good as the *Da Vinci Code*? Some think so. Dan Brown readers know that his books always have a secret within a secret and a mix of dazzling suspense, a relentless pace and a reliance on ancient knowledge. Symbologist Robert Langdon (star of the *Da Vinci Code*) uses his best problem-solving skills to save the day of this page-turner set in Washington D.C. Fiction. 509 pages

Love in the Time of Cholera by Gabriel Garcia Marquez

In the late 1800s Caribbean, the humble Florentino falls in love with the beautiful Fermina, whose father wants her to find a better suitor. So Fermina marries a doctor and thinks of herself as “the happiest woman in the world.” After 51 years her husband dies and she finds Florentino pursuing her. A magnificent story of love and how it can overcome all and last a long time. Illusions and reality mix in this great work by the winner of the Nobel Prize for Literature. Fiction. 348 pages

The Lovely Bones by Alice Sebold

After being raped and killed, 14-year-old Susie Salmon keeps watch, from heaven, on her grieving family, her brazen murderer and the police who are trying to solve the crime. This heartbreaking debut novel is a moving exploration of loss. Sweet, touching and an incredible read. Fiction. 328 pages

Loving Frank by Nancy Horan

Both poignant and compelling, this is a fictional account of Frank Lloyd Wright’s affair with Mamah Borthwick Cheney. When Mamah and the architect left their spouses and combined family of nine children to escape to Europe, great scandal ensued. Wright went on to build Taliesin, an inspired house in Wisconsin, for himself and Mamah, but tragedy followed. The book captures Mamah’s moral quandary and how she, an educated woman, felt constrained by the social mores of the times. A nuanced and satisfying read. Historical Fiction. 377 pages

Lying Awake by Mark Salzman

Sister John of the Cross, who for many years has been a cloistered Carmelite nun in a Los Angeles convent, begins to experience mystical visions that reignite her religious commitment. When she finds out that the visions may be caused by epilepsy, she must decide what has the greater value—her health or her need to live a richer life. This short, imaginative and moving work has much to discuss. Fiction. 181 pages

Major Pettigrew’s Last Stand by Helen Simonson

With his stiff upper lip, widower Major Ernest Pettigrew is the personification of English values and very different from his greedy son. When the son wants to sell a family heirloom, Major Pettigrew finds an ally in the

local Pakistani shopkeeper Jamina Ali and friendship turns into romance. The two must then navigate local gossip and prejudice. Stylish, witty and with unforgettable characters. Fiction. 368 pages

A Man Called Ove by Fredrik Backman

Ove is a grumble Gus of the first degree. Rules are made to be followed, signs are meant to be obeyed, and don't even get him started about computers and mobile phones. In truth, Ove has been this way his whole life, but he's gotten worse in the last four years since his wife, Sonia, died, taking with her all the color in a world Ove sees as black-and-white. Ove has decided life without Sonia is not worth living and plans to join her in the next world. But a young couple and their two children (a third is on the way) move in next door, his oldest friend and most feared enemy is about to be forcibly removed to a nursing home, and a street-scarred cat insinuates itself into his life. Suddenly, Ove's suicide plans get delayed as he helps solve neighborly crises large and small. Fiction. 337 pages.

A Map of the World by Jane Hamilton

Alice Goodwin is caring for her best friend's children when 2-year-old Lizzy Collins wanders to the pond on the Goodwin farm and drowns. The consequences of this tragedy reverberate through a small Wisconsin community, which never accepted Howard and Alice Goodwin. Fiction. 389 pages.

March by Geraldine Brooks

Exploring the devastation and moral complexity of the Civil War, this novel re-imagines Mr. March, the father and chaplain who has gone to war in *Little Women*. His early idealism lost, Mr. March presses on to find himself at both at a home he visited in his youth and at a liberated plantation where he is almost killed. Rescued, in the hospital and all but broken man, March revives and returns home, where he finds certainty and stability in fatherhood. 2006 Pulitzer Prize for Fiction. Historical Fiction. 280 pages

Marley and Me by John Grogan

Those looking for "cheerful" books will enjoy this memoir about the "world's worst dog." A shaggy dog story that will make reads laugh and cry. Particularly for pet lovers. Biography & Memoir. 291 pages

Me Talk Pretty One Day by David Sedaris

Humorist David Sedaris mocks himself and mines life's simple events for some very amusing and caustic observations. Whether writing about overcoming a lisp, trying to master French, his brother's spicy language or learning to play the guitar, the author makes us laugh. Not everything is funny to everybody, but readers with absurd and quirky senses of humor will laugh out loud. Nonfiction. 272 pages

Memoirs of a Geisha by Arthur Golden

An impoverished young Japanese girl becomes a geisha during the 1930s. This seductive and unique story describes the elaborate and mysterious life of a geisha and is rich with detail. Historical Fiction. 530 pages

The Memory Keeper's Daughter by Kim Edwards

While driving his pregnant wife Norah to the hospital, a snow storm causes Dr. David Henry to instead stop at his own medical clinic, where he delivers two children—a boy and a girl with Down syndrome. Telling his wife that the second child has died, he gives the girl to his nurse to raise. Many years later Norah discovers that her daughter is alive. Sympathetic exploration of how grief can be healed. Fiction. 401 pages

Mennonite in a Little Black Dress: Memoir of Going Home by Rhoda Janzen

Wonderfully funny, for a change, this is a memoir of a woman who gets in a car wreck right after her husband leaves her for a guy he meets on the Internet and saddles her with a big mortgage. She finds herself moving back in with her parents who are Mennonites. A warm, wonderful story from a self-deprecating author who is a good sport about going through life's travails and getting back on her feet. Biography & Memoir. 241 pages

Mermaid Chair by Sue Monk Kidd

The author of *The Secret Life of Bees* follows her debut novel with this thoughtful tale of a middle-aged woman whose stay on the island where her mother lives make her think about the stifled dreams of her conventional

life. Wonderful characterizations, a budding romance and magical descriptions make this soulful novel come to life. Fiction. 335 pages

Middlesex by Jeffrey Eugenides

"I was born twice: first, as a baby girl...in January of 1960; and then again, as a teenage boy...in August of 1974." So begins this story of hermaphrodite Calliope Stephanides who becomes the teenage boy Cal and narrates the story of his life that of his Greek family. The author helps readers overcome the initial surprise and become comfortable with different ideas of gender and individuality. 2003 Pulitzer Prize. Fiction. 529 pages

Million Little Pieces by James Frey

This bestselling book, made even more famous because Oprah Winfrey faulted the author for writing a memoir based on lies, is nevertheless a page-turningly readable and compelling memoir about substance abuse. Reviewers called it "electrifying." Readers can also talk about other memoirs they have read and wonder what is truth and what is fiction. Biography & Memoir. 430 pages

Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children by Ransom Riggs

As a kid, Jacob formed a special bond with his grandfather over his bizarre tales and photos of levitating girls and invisible boys. Now at 16, he is reeling from the old man's unexpected death. Then Jacob is given a mysterious letter that propels him on a journey to the remote Welsh island where his grandfather grew up. There, he finds the children from the photographs--alive and well--despite the islanders' assertion that all were killed decades ago. As Jacob begins to unravel more about his grandfather's childhood, he suspects he is being trailed by a monster only he can see. Young Adult Fiction. 352 pages

Mother of Pearl by Melinda Haynes

Set in Petal, Mississippi in the late 1950s, this is a wonderfully told story about how the lives of black and white friends and neighbors become intertwined. From separate universes, the characters come together and form a family. Heartwarming, ironic and funny. Fiction. 466 pages

Mountains Beyond Mountains by Tracy Kidder

With degrees in medicine and anthropology Dr. Paul Farmer tries to relieve the suffering in "just the kind of places we don't like to think about." Dividing his time between Haiti (one of most disease-ridden places on earth) and Harvard (the Wall Street of medicine), Dr. Farmer toils to keep people alive. The book also covers the topics of public health and Dr. Farmer's belief that poverty is a huge factor in poor health. Nonfiction. 322 pages

Mr. Penumbra's 24-Hour Bookstore by Robin Sloan

After a layoff during the Great Recession sidelines his tech career, Clay Jannon takes a job at the titular bookstore in San Francisco and soon realizes that the establishment is a façade for a strange secret. Fiction. 288 pages.

My Antonia by Willa Cather

This classic story of Antonia, a spirited immigrant in 19th century Nebraska, is as memorable for its main character as it is for its portrait of pioneer life. Romantic and beautifully written. Classic Fiction. 219 pages

My Beloved World by Sonia Sotomayor

An instant American icon—the first Hispanic on the U.S. Supreme Court—tells the story of her life before becoming a judge in an inspiring, surprisingly personal memoir. With startling candor and intimacy, Sonia Sotomayor recounts her life from a Bronx housing project to the federal bench, a progress that is testament to her extraordinary determination and the power of believing in oneself. Biography & Memoir. 315 pages

My Life in France by Julia Child

Bon Appetit! Julia Child's final book (she passed away at the age of 91 in 2004) recalls her love affair with France. Living in France with her much-adored husband Paul from 1948-1954, she experiences the excitement

of all things French—culture, cuisine and learning to cook at the celebrated Cordon Bleu cooking school. The six foot two inch Child's gentle stories are spirited and delightful. Nonfiction. 352 pages

The Namesake by Jhumpa Lahiri

Right after a newlywed Indian couple moves to Cambridge, Massachusetts, their son is born and, through an odd set of circumstances, is given the name Gogol. As the parents try to navigate American life, second generation Gogol has his own problems trying to fit in and make his way in the world. Beautifully written, comic and tragic, this many layered story has great appeal. Fiction. 291 pages

Never Let Me Go by Kazuo Ishiguro

Set in late 1990s England, in a parallel universe in which humans are cloned and raised expressly to "donate" their healthy organs and thus eradicate disease from the normal population, this is an epic ethical horror story, told in devastatingly poignant miniature. By age 31, narrator (and clone) Kathy H has spent nearly 12 years as a "carer" to dozens of "donors." Knowing that her number is sure to come up soon, she recounts in excruciating detail the fraught, minute dramas of her happily sheltered childhood and adolescence at Hailsham, an idyllic, isolated school/orphanage where clone-students are encouraged to make art and feel special. Science Fiction. 288 pages

Nickel and Dimed: on (Not) Getting by in America by Barbara Ehrenreich

As relevant now as when it was published, this is a witty and provocative work about jobs, employees and salaries. Author Ehrenreich, who frequently writes on the downside of economics, poses as a worker and takes a variety of minimum wage jobs and tries to eke out a living as a hotel maid, a Wal-Mart associate, a nursing home aide and a house cleaner. This first-hand account will be cause for much discussion. Nonfiction. 230 pages

The Night Circus by Erin Morgenstern

The circus arrives without warning. No announcements precede it. It is simply there, when yesterday it was not. Within the black-and-white striped canvas tents is an utterly unique experience full of breathtaking amazements. It is called *Le Cirque des Rêves*, and it is only open at night. But behind the scenes, a fierce competition is underway: a duel between two young magicians, Celia and Marco, who have been trained since childhood expressly for this purpose by their mercurial instructors. Unbeknownst to them both, this is a game in which only one can be left standing. Despite the high stakes, Celia and Marco soon tumble headfirst into love, setting off a domino effect of dangerous consequences, and leaving the lives of everyone, from the performers to the patrons, hanging in the balance. Fiction. 516 pages

Nothing Daunted: The Unexpected Education of Two Society Girls in the West by Dorothy Wickenden

In 1916 two spirited, educated (Smith college graduates) and well-bred Eastern women head west to take teaching jobs on the frontier of Colorado. Writing about her grandmother Dorothy and best friend Rosamund, the author uses diaries, letters and memoirs to capture a time and place in transition. The women meet cowboys, ride horses to work and teach children who slog through snow to get to school. An exhilarating story of two intrepid young women. Nonfiction. 286 pages

The Number One Ladies Detective Agency by Alexander McCall Smith

More of a leisurely read than a mystery, this gentle story about "traditionally-sized" Precious Ramotswe, Botswana's first, and maybe only, lady detective is delightful. With sass, great detecting skills and common sense, she solves a variety of cases. Pull up a chair, make a cup of bush tea and enjoy the first in a series. Fiction. 235 pages

Olive Kitteridge by Elizabeth Strout

Thirteen short stories, set in a small town in Maine, are linked together by the character of Olive Kitteridge, a seventh-grade math teacher. Though the stories often pack an emotional wallop, there are also flashes of humor. 2009 Pulitzer Prize for Fiction. Fiction/Short Stories. 270 pages

On Gold Mountain by Lisa See

Lisa See's first book is the autobiographical saga of her family, beginning with her Chinese, great-grandfather Fong See, who came to California in 1871 to work on the railroad, and his second wife, Caucasian Lettice

Pruett. Taking place over a hundred year period, the book describes the family's fractured relationships and hard work that brought them success and failure. The final couple depicted in the book is See's eccentric parents, Richard and Carolyn See. As in her fiction work, it is the women's stories that are the most powerful. Terrific history that reads like fiction. Nonfiction. 394 pages

One Hundred Years of Solitude by Gabriel Garcia Marquez

Considered the masterpiece novel by the Nobel Prize for Literature winner, this is the multi-generational story of the Beundia family who found the town of Macondo (a metaphor for Colombia). Told in a non-linear way, full of symbolism and magic and chronicling seven generations of characters, this magnificent work is full of comedy and tragedy. Original and compelling. Fiction. 458 pages

102 Minutes: The Untold Story of the Fight to Survive Inside the Twin Towers by Jim Dwyer and Kevin Flynn.

Why and how did some people escape from the World Trade Towers and why did some die? This heart-pounding, meticulous account written by two newspaper reporters is a different approach to a painfully familiar subject. Focuses on the human experience and allows readers to put themselves in the place of the men and women who lived and died. Nonfiction. 322 pages

The Orchid Thief by Susan Orlean

Determined to clone an endangered flower—the rare ghost orchid *Polyrrhiza lindenii*—a deeply eccentric and oddly attractive man named John Laroche leads Orlean on an unforgettable tour of America's strange flower-selling subculture, through Florida's swamps and beyond, along with the Seminoles who help him and the forces of justice who fight him. In the end, Orlean—and the reader—will have more respect for underdog determination and a powerful new definition of passion. Nonfiction. 296 pages

The Orphan Master's Son by Adam Johnson

The son of an influential father who runs an orphan work camp, Pak Jun Do rises to prominence using instinctive talents and eventually becomes a professional kidnapper and romantic rival to Kim Jong Il. 2013 Pulitzer Prize for Fiction. Fiction. 456 pages

Orphan Train by Christina Baker Kline

Penobscot Indian Molly Ayer is close to "aging out" out of the foster care system. A community service position helping an elderly woman clean out her home is the only thing keeping Molly out of juvie and worse...As she helps Vivian sort through her possessions and memories, Molly learns that she and Vivian aren't as different as they seem to be. A young Irish immigrant orphaned in New York City, Vivian was put on a train to the Midwest with hundreds of other children whose destinies would be determined by luck and chance. Molly discovers that she has the power to help Vivian find answers to mysteries that have haunted her for her entire life – answers that will ultimately free them both. Historical Fiction. 273 pages

The Other Boleyn Girl by Philippa Gregory

Before Henry VII ever considered making Anne Boleyn his wife, her older sister Mary was his mistress. Historical novelist Gregory uses the perspective of this "other Boleyn girl" to reveal the rivalries and intrigues swirling through England. The author's knowledge of history and her ability to make the splendor and turbulence of the times come to life make this an enthralling read. Historical Fiction. 664 pages

Outliers: The Story of Success by Malcolm Gladwell

Gladwell identifies the qualities of successful people, posing theories about the cultural, family, and idiosyncratic factors that shape high achievers, in a resource that covers such topics as the secrets of software billionaires, why certain cultures are associated with better academic performance, and why the Beatles earned their fame. Nonfiction. 309 pages

Out Stealing Horses by Per Petterson

A widower nearing 70 moves to a remote Norway and ruminates on one day in 1948, a day that began as an exhilarating adventure to take some horses from a nearby farm that ends in an abrupt and unexpected way.

The interplay between the adult recollecting and child's perspective make this a gripping and original book that will stay with the reader for some time. Fiction. 238 pages

Paper Towns by John Green

One month before graduating from his Central Florida high school, Quentin "Q" Jacobsen basks in the predictable boringness of his life. Then, the beautiful and exciting Margo Roth Spiegelman, Q's neighbor and classmate, takes him on a midnight adventure, and mysteriously disappears. Always an enigma, Margo has now become a mystery. But there are clues. And they're for Q. Young Adult Fiction. 305 pages

The Paris Wife by Paula McLain

The Paris Wife captures a remarkable period of time and a love affair between two unforgettable people: Ernest Hemingway and his wife Hadley. Though deeply in love, the Hemingways are ill prepared for the hard-drinking and fast-living life of Jazz Age Paris, which hardly values traditional notions of family and monogamy. Surrounded by beautiful women and competing egos, Ernest struggles to find the voice that will earn him a place in history. Hadley, meanwhile, strives to hold on to her sense of self as the demands of life with Ernest grow costly and her roles as wife, friend, and muse become more challenging. Fiction. 335 pages

The Particular Sadness of Lemon Cake by Aimee Bender

Eating her birthday cake on her ninth birthday, Rose Edelstein discovers that she has an odd gift: she can literally taste the emotions of whoever prepares her food, giving her unwanted insight into the secret emotional lives of other people. Magical realism in Los Angeles. With plot surprises and interesting characters, this coming-of-age story is both odd and beguiling. Fiction. 292 pages

Peace Like a River by Leif Enger

Reuben Land, an asthmatic 11-year-old boy, recalls the events of his childhood in a small Minnesota town in 1962. When two bullies break into the Land house, Reuben's brother kills them and then escapes. The Land family goes in search of the missing outlaw brother. With a wonderful understanding of human nature and family love, this is a memorable story. Fiction. 312 pages

Peony in Love by Lisa See

Peony, a 15-year-old already betrothed Chinese girl, breaches etiquette when she accidentally sees a man who has entered the family garden. Mirroring a well-known opera called *The Peony Pavilion*, the story tells of a young woman who chafes at social conventions. Like her earlier *Snowflower and the Secret Fan*, Lisa See fills her books with colorful historical details. Historical Fiction. 297 pages

People of the Book by Geraldine Brooks

Inspired by a true story of a mysterious codex (Latin for block of wood, but we know it as a modern book with pages) known as the Sarajevo Haggadah. This is a sweeping adventure story about a rare book expert who is hired to restore the codex and eventually discovers its origins and unlocks its mysteries. Spanning time from Medieval Spain (where members of the Inquisition try to burn it), to World War II (where Nazis try to burn it) to the war in Bosnia (where it is again rescued from harm), this is a dazzling and swashbuckling novel. Historical Fiction. 372 pages

The Perks of Being a Wallflower by Stephen Chbosky

A coming of age novel about Charlie, a freshman in high school who is a wallflower, shy and introspective, and very intelligent. He deals with the usual teen problems, but also with the suicide of his best friend. Fiction. Young Adult. 213 pages

Personal History by Katherine Graham

From a sheltered and wealthy childhood (at boarding school she wore the same dirty sweater over and over because she did not know how to do laundry) to marriage to a formidable and unstable husband who takes the

reins of her family business to her own independence as one of the most powerful women in the United States, this is a biography of Katherine Graham. The story of her life is framed by the changing role of women and against the political events in Washington and culminates in her involvement in exposing the Watergate scandal. 1998 Pulitzer Prize. Biography & Memoir. 642 pages

The Piano Teacher by Janice Lee

Plain and clumsy Claire Pendleton escapes spinsterhood and her home in England by marrying a man she does not love and moving to Hong Kong in 1952. Taking a job as a piano teacher with a wealthy Chinese family, she soon begins an affair with their enigmatic British chauffeur. The Japanese invasion of China during World War II reaches out from the past and impacts the present in this suspenseful and poignant story. The author grew up in Hong Kong and has a great eye for detail. Historical Fiction. 328 pages

The Piano Tuner by Daniel Mason

Edgar Drake, a middle-aged, mild-mannered Englishman devoted to his wife and the craft of piano tuning, who has never been out of England takes on a very odd task in 1886. The British War Office, responding to a request from a surgeon-general stationed in Burma, in the far reaches of the Empire, wants his piano tuned. The first half of the novel recounts Drake's journey to Burma and the second half portrays Drake's growing infatuation with the exotic land and particularly with a Burmese woman he meets. Haunting, passionate storytelling. Fiction. 317 pages

Pillars of the Earth by Ken Follett

Set in 12th century England this magnificent novel is the story of a prior, his master builder and the community members of the fictional village of Kingsbridge as they struggle to build a cathedral while protecting themselves during the tumultuous time after the death of Henry I. A radical departure from the thrillers he usually writes, Follett has written a great adventure which is not weighted down by the tremendous amount of historical detail. A very big and very satisfying book. Historical Fiction. 973 pages

Plainsong by Kent Haruf

Holt, Colorado, a small town where everyone knows everybody's business before it happens, is home to a group of people brought together by a teacher who makes them interact. Gentle and plainspoken, this is a very satisfying story that relies on vivid characters that bring it to life. Fiction. 301 pages

Playing for Pizza by John Grisham

Italians do play American football and the Parma Panthers wanted any NFL player who join their team. So third-string Rick Dockery, a terrible player, signs up with this underdog team and becomes enchanted with all things Italian. Grisham took a break from legal thrillers to write this light-hearted comic story of sports, food and romance. Fiction. 262 pages

The Plot Against America by Phillip Roth

In this stunning novel of "alternative history" President Franklin Roosevelt is defeated by Charles Lindbergh in the 1940 election and Lindbergh begins a campaign against Jews. In this atmosphere of religious hatred a Jewish family is divided by those who see the final outcome of the intolerance and those who have been persuaded it is in their best interest. This stunning novel, which is often quite funny, balances personal, domestic and national events and challenges the reader to think about what happens when a government limits religious freedom in the name of national interest. Fiction. 391 pages

The Poisoner's Handbook: Murder and the Birth of Forensic Medicine in Jazz Age New York by Deborah Blum

Pulitzer Prize-winning science writer Deborah Blum follows New York City's first forensic scientists to discover a fascinating Jazz Age story of chemistry and detection, poison and murder. She draws from highly original

research to track the fascinating, perilous days when a pair of forensic scientists, chief medical examiner Charles Norris and toxicologist Alexander Gettler, began their trailblazing chemical detective work, fighting to end an era when untraceable poisons offered an easy path to the perfect crime. Nonfiction. 319 pages

Poisonwood Bible by Barbara Kingsolver

Doomed by his own self-righteousness, a Baptist minister's move to the Congo with his family becomes a foolhardy and dangerous venture. With its great background detail, excellent characterizations and biting humor, this is both a compelling family saga and a tragic look at Africa. Fiction. 546 pages

Portrait in Sepia by Isabel Allende

Sequel to *Daughter of Fortune*. Aurora del Valle, the grand-daughter of Eliza Sommers (*Daughter of Fortune's* main character), is born in San Francisco, but kidnapped and taken to Chile where she is raised. The trauma of Aurora's early life haunts her, but she seeks to find her heritage. Authentically evoking nineteenth century California and Chile, Allende presents a portrait rich in colorful characters and a compelling story. Historical Fiction. 304 pages

The Postmistress by Sarah Blake

During World War II the stories of three very different women (single postmistress Iris James and young newlywed Emma Trask, both of Cape Cod, and American reporter Frankie Bard, who stationed in Europe) are woven together. As Frankie risks her life to record the news, Iris and Emma struggle to maintain order at the homefront as America reluctantly goes to war. Romantic, unsentimental and beautifully written. Historical Fiction. 371 pages

The Power of Habit by Charles Duhigg

New York Times business reporter Charles Duhigg takes us to the thrilling edge of scientific discoveries that explain why habits exist and how they can be changed. With penetrating intelligence and an ability to distill vast amounts of information into engrossing narratives, he brings to life a whole new understanding of human nature and its potential for transformation. Along the way we learn why some people and companies struggle to change, despite years of trying, while others seem to remake themselves overnight. Nonfiction. 371 pages

Pride and Prejudice by Jane Austen

In early nineteenth-century England, a spirited young woman copes with the suit of a snobbish gentleman, as well as the romantic entanglements of her four sisters. Classic Fiction. 435 pages.

The Prize Winner of Defiance, Ohio by Terry Ryan

Introduces Evelyn Ryan, an enterprising woman who kept poverty at bay with wit, poetry, and perfect prose during the "contest era" of the 1950s and 1960s. Standing up to the church, her alcoholic husband, and antiquated ideas about women, Evelyn turned every financial challenge into an opportunity for innovation, all the while raising her six sons and four daughters with the belief that miracles are an everyday occurrence. Evelyn Ryan's story is told by her daughter Terry with an infectious joy that shows how a winning spirit and sense of humor can triumph over adversity every time. Biography & Memoir. 351 pages

Prodigal Summer by Barbara Kingsolver

Three stories of human love are woven together in this novel about those who live in the forests and on the small farms of Appalachia during one wet summer. The characters in the story never meet, but their lives overlap and readers discover the connections between each of them. Fiction. 444 pages

The Prophet by Kahlil Gibran

A collection of poetic essays that are philosophical, spiritual, and inspirational. Gibran's musings are divided into 28 chapters covering such sprawling topics as love, marriage, children, giving, eating and drinking, work, joy and sorrow, housing, clothes, buying and selling, crime and punishment, laws, freedom, reason and

passion, pain, self-knowledge, teaching, friendship, good and evil, prayer, pleasure, beauty, religion, and death. Published in 1923, it has been translated into more than 20 languages. Nonfiction. 96 pages

Quiet: The Power of Introverts in a World That Can't Stop Talking by Susan Cain

At least one-third of the people we know are introverts. They are the ones who prefer listening to speaking, reading to partying; who innovate and create but dislike self-promotion; who favor working on their own over brainstorming in teams. Although they are often labeled "quiet," it is to introverts that we owe many of the great contributions to society—from van Gogh's sunflowers to the invention of the personal computer. Passionately argued, impressively researched, and filled with indelible stories of real people, *Quiet* shows how dramatically we undervalue introverts, and how much we lose in doing so. Nonfiction. 352 pages

The Reader by Bernard Schlink

A teenager in post-World War II Germany and an enigmatic woman unexpectedly become lovers. Their routine of lovemaking is followed by his reading to her from the German classics, but he knows little about her and they drift apart. When he is older and a law student he sits in on a case and discovers that his former lover is being tried as a Nazi war criminal. Lots to talk about in this coming-of-age story that is also a story about good versus evil and the role of moral responsibility. Fiction. 281 pages

Reading Lolita in Tehran by Afar Nafisi

After she resigned from her job as a university professor in Iran, the author invited seven former students to secretly read and discuss great books of Western literature—books that were banned by the government. As the women read and talked they began to share stories of their own lives, the repression they experienced and their small acts of freedom in the face of that repression. Nonfiction. 356 pages

Rebecca by Daphne DuMaurier

"Last night I dreamt I went to Manderley again. It seemed to me I stood by the iron gate leading to the drive and for a while I could not enter, for the way was barred to me." These famous lines begin the classic and mysterious story that still speaks to readers. The central character meets and marries the very rich Maxim de Winter and moves to the fabulous estate of Manderley, which is permeated with the presence of de Winter's first wife Rebecca. A terrific classic, whether reading for the first time or reading again. Classic Fiction. 410 pages

The Red Tent by Anita Diamant

Dinah, daughter of Jacob and sister of Joseph, and a tribal midwife in Biblical times, assists the women who enter the red tent, the place where they are sequestered during menses and childbirth. Sharing gossip and encouragement, they bring to life the women of the Bible. Historical Fiction. 321 pages

A Reliable Wife by Robert Goolrick

This Gothic tale, which takes place in 1907, is the story of Ralph Truitt, a man burning with the desire of living a solitary life, who awaits his mail order bride, only to discover that the woman is interested in his wealth. Marrying her anyway, he soon begins to sicken because she is poisoning him. He does not die, but the story unfolds in ways neither the characters nor the readers expect. Fiction. 305 pages

The Road by Cormac McCarthy

After an unexplained cataclysm destroys life on earth and all of civilization, a father and son journey to the sea—basically a trip to nowhere. Passing a burning landscape and people unleashed from the kindness of humanity, the father is on a mission to protect his son. 2007 Pulitzer Prize for Fiction. Fiction. 287 pages

Room by Emma Donoghue

After being abducted a young woman is held captive in a 120 square foot room where her captor forces himself on her and fathers her child. Jack, the 5-year-old child, narrates this story of the captivity, escape and

aftermath. Inspired by a similar, true story, *Room* is not sensational, but has elements of discovery and hope. Superb writing. Fiction. 321 pages

The Round House by Louise Erdrich

When his mother, a tribal enrollment specialist living on a reservation in North Dakota, slips into an abyss of depression after being brutally attacked, 14-year-old Joe Coutz sets out with his three friends to find the person who destroyed his family. 2012 National Book Award. Fiction. 321 pages

The Rules of Civility by Amor Towles

Set in New York City in 1938, *Rules of Civility* tells the story of a watershed year in the life of an uncompromising 25-year-old named Katey Kontent. Armed with little more than a formidable intellect, a bracing wit, and her own brand of cool nerve, Katey embarks on a journey from a Wall Street secretarial pool through the upper echelons of New York society in search of a brighter future. Fiction. 335 pages

Running with Scissors by Augusten Burroughs

This memoir by an author who chose his own name is a hilarious and original tale of a boy who is raised in a chaotic home with an eccentric family. Ultimately a feel good story, this memoir (among many memoirs about dysfunctional homes) stands out because of the wonderful characters and the apparent fact that our main character is a survivor. Biography & Memoir. 315 pages

The Samurai's Garden by Gail Tsukiyama

Just as the Japanese are invading China, a young Chinese man with tuberculosis is sent to a small Japanese village to recuperate. His relationships with the locals bring him to a greater wisdom about love, honor and loss. Historical Fiction. 211 pages

The Sandcastle Girls by Chris Bohjalian – **ONE BOOK/ONE GLENDALE 2014**

World War I is spreading across Europe, and Elizabeth Endicott has volunteered to deliver food and medical aid to refugees of the Armenian genocide. In Syria, she becomes friendly with Armen, a young Armenian engineer who has already lost his wife and infant daughter. Flash forward to the present, where we meet Laura Petrosian, a novelist living in suburban New York who has never really given her Armenian heritage much thought. But when an old friend calls, she embarks on a journey back through her family's history that reveals a wrenching secret buried for generations. This spellbinding tale travels between Aleppo, Syria in 1915 and Bronxville, New York in 2012—a historical love story steeped in the author's Armenian heritage. Fiction. 299 pages

Sarah's Key by Tatiana de Rosney

Two stories converge in this remarkable historical novel. In 1942 German occupied Paris Sarah, the daughter of a Jewish family about to be taken by the Nazis, locks her brother in a closet so he is not taken away, but the family wonders if it will be able to return and rescue the young boy. Skipping ahead to 2002 an American journalist, married to a Frenchman, discovers that the apartment where she lives once housed Jews that were deported. When the journalist decides to unravel what happened to the family that once lived there, the history of the boy and the family is discovered. Historical Fiction. 293 pages

Seabiscuit by Laura Hillenbrand

Mentioned more often than President Franklin Roosevelt in newspapers of the 1930', the race horse Seabiscuit was a national hero who gave hope to people during the Great Depression. Expertly researched, this page-turning book tells the story of how the horse, with knobby legs and a down-on-his-luck jockey, became such a triumphant winner. Nonfiction. 399 pages

The Secret History by Donna Tartt

Under the influence of their charismatic classics professor, a group of clever, eccentric misfits at an elite New England college discover a way of thinking and living that is a world away from the humdrum existence of their

contemporaries. But when they go beyond the boundaries of normal morality their lives are changed profoundly and forever, and they discover how hard it can be to truly live and how easy it is to kill. Fiction. 559 pages

The Secret Life of Bees by Sue Monk Kidd

Living with her abusive father on a middle-of-nowhere peach farm, 14-year-old Lily yearns for her dead mother. When Lily's only friend, the African-American nanny Rosaleen, is attacked by racists in their 1964 South Carolina town, the two of them set off on a journey that takes them to the home of three beekeeping sisters, who shelter them and give Lily an optimistic future. Fiction. 302 pages

The Sense of an Ending by Julian Barnes

Follows middle-aged Tony Webster as he reflects on a past he thought was behind him. With his marriage and family and career fallen into an amicable divorce and retirement, he is presented with a mysterious legacy that obliges him to reconsider a variety of things he thought he'd understood all along and to revise his estimation of his own nature and place in the world. Winner, Man Booker Prize. Fiction. 163 pages

1776 by David McCullough

Historian McCullough captures the turbulent and momentous year of 1776 when American and British politicians struggled to reach a compromise, but eventually were led to war. Presenting well-rounded portraits of George Washington and King George III, the author cuts through mythology to address the personalities and motivations of each man. The book also vividly depicts the dismal conditions the soldiers from both sides endured and explains how a ragtag group of Americans won a war against the world's greatest empire. Enthralling and superbly written. Nonfiction. 386 pages

The Shadow of the Wind by Carlos Ruiz Zafón

This international bestseller is an original and unusual novel that lures the reader into a magical world. Set in 1950s Barcelona, Spain, young Daniel is taken to a secret library by his father and told to choose a book. The chosen book is by an obscure author whose books are being tracked down and burned by a mysterious stranger. Thus young Daniel grows into adulthood transfixed by the book and all that surrounds it. Compelling reading. Fiction. 486 pages

Shanghai Girls by Lisa See -- **ONE BOOK/ONE GLENDALE 2009**

Spanning 1937 to 1957, this is the story of sisters Pearl and May whose lives in Shanghai are disrupted by arranged marriages and the Japanese invasion of China and who must immigrate to California. Incarcerated at the Ellis Island-like Angel Island, they then are able to come to Los Angeles Chinatown, where they start new lives. Rich in history and detail, this book is a wonderful exploration of the relationship of two sisters. Historical Fiction. 314 pages

The Shipping News by Annie Proulx

Quoyle, a sad sack writer who moves his children and straight-talking aunt back to their ancestral home in Newfoundland, is the central character in this story of a group of people confronting the hard, cold life of an island fishing village. Told with great wit and glorious language, this novel is a page turner. 1994 Pulitzer Prize for Fiction; 1993 National Book Award. Fiction. 337 pages

Slaughterhouse-Five by Kurt Vonnegut

One of the world's great anti-war books. Centering on the infamous fire-bombing of Dresden, Billy Pilgrim's odyssey through time reflects the mythic journey of our own fractured lives as we search for meaning in what we are afraid to know. Classic Fiction. 275 pages

The Snow Child by Eowyn Ivey

Alaska, 1920: a brutal place to homestead, and especially tough for recent arrivals Jack and Mabel. Childless, they are drifting apart—he breaking under the weight of the work of the farm; she crumbling from loneliness

and despair. In a moment of levity during the season's first snowfall, they build a child out of snow. The next morning the snow child is gone, but they glimpse a young, blonde-haired girl running through the trees. They come to love this little girl, who calls herself Faina, as their own daughter, but in this beautiful, violent place things are rarely as they appear. Fiction. 391 pages

Snow Falling on Cedars by David Guterson

Set in the 1950s in the Puget Sound islands of Washington, the murder trial of a Japanese-American fisherman is the focal point of this novel that also calls up lingering memories of the World War II internment camps. Great characterizations and the beautiful Pacific Northwest setting make this a poetic and thoughtful novel. Historical Fiction. 460 pages

Snow Flower and the Secret Fan by Lisa See

Two 19th century Chinese girls, meant to be friends for life, are imprisoned by rigid rules of conduct, which require that their feet be bound. This engrossing and poignant novel, which takes the girls into womanhood, is based on the author's meticulous research. Historical Fiction. 269 pages

The Soloist by Mark Salzman

An emotionally distant one-time cello prodigy is transformed by two events—his involvement as juror in a murder trial and the music lessons he gives to a new student. This spiritual journey by a local author is beautifully written. Fiction. 284 pages

The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down by Anne Fadiman

Two cultures clash in this extraordinary story of a Hmong (Laotian) immigrant family with a very ill child and the California doctors who try to care for her. The author of this thought-provoking, beautifully woven story never takes sides. Nonfiction. 341 pages

State of Wonder by Ann Patchett

The author of *Bel Canto* returns with a plot-twisting and page-turning novel. Dr. Marina Singh, a research assistant for a pharmaceutical company in Minnesota, is sent to Brazil to locate the remains of a fellow worker, who went into the rainforest to find the reclusive Dr. Annick Swenson, who is researching fertility. The author's magnificent descriptions of the flora and fauna are matched by the creative plot and characters. Masterful storytelling. Fiction. 353 pages

Station Eleven by Emily St. John Mandel

Examines the collapse of civilization after a deadly flu wipes out most of the world's population. Moving gracefully from the first days of the plague to years before it and decades after, Mandel anchors the story to Arthur Leander, a famous actor who dies of a heart attack while playing King Lear on stage. We see glimpses of Arthur's life years before his passing: his doomed relationship with his first wife, the exploitation of an old friendship, his failings as a father. And then we follow characters whose lives Arthur touched in some way: the paramedic who tried to save him, his second ex-wife and their damaged son, the child actress who joins a traveling theater troupe-cum-orchestra. In this postpandemic time, people live in gas stations and motels, curate museums filled with cell phones and car engines, and treasure tabloids and comic books. One comic book gives the novel its title and encapsulates the longing felt by the survivors for the world they have lost. Science Fiction. 333 pages.

Steve Jobs by Walter Isaacson

Based on more than 40 interviews with Jobs conducted over two years, as well as interviews with more than a hundred family members, friends, adversaries, competitors, and colleagues, Isaacson wrote a riveting story of the roller-coaster life and searingly intense personality of a creative entrepreneur whose passion for perfection and ferocious drive revolutionized six industries: personal computers, animated movies, music, phones, tablet computing, and digital publishing. Biography & Memoir. 630 pages

Stolen Lives: Twenty Years in a Desert Jail by Malika Oufkir

After living a life of great abundance as friends of the king of Morocco, a family is forced into exile when the father engineers a failed coup against the king. Enduring 20 years of solitude and infested prison cells, the

family is finally released. The grim ordeal, told in first person narrative, is a compelling chronicle of how a family survives in spite of the most demeaning life. Biography & Memoir. 293 pages

Stones for Ibarra by Harriet Doerr

Thinking that it will be an idyllic adventure, a San Francisco couple moves to Mexico to re-start a family business. Living without electricity and water in an unfamiliar culture, Sara and Richard experience life in a subtle and surprising way. Great depth of character and setting add to the quiet quality of the book. Fiction. 214 pages

Stones from the River by Ursula Hegi

A perennial outsider because she is a dwarf, Trudy Montag lives in a small German town prior to and after World War II. She exploits her gift for eliciting secrets from people and protects those who show her kindness. Drawing strength and wisdom from her inability to fit into a conformist society, this book is sensitive and rewarding. Fiction. 525 pages

The Story of Edgar Sawtelle by David Wroblewski

Born mute in rural Wisconsin, young hero Edgar communicates with people, dogs and even ghosts with a mix of sign and body language. Although Edgar's grandfather breeds a line of dogs called Sawtelles, known for their intelligence and temperament, the Sawtelle family's traits are not so easily predicted. When Edgar's father dies, young Edgar tries to prove his uncle's role in the death and then must flee, with his dogs, into the forest, until he can return home. Masterful storytelling and compulsively readable. Fiction. 566 pages

Swamplandia by Karen Russell

This wildly inventive story tells the story of the Bigtree family who live in Florida and run a broken down amusement park called Swamplandia. Trying to attract tourists and without a drop of Native American blood, family members dress up as Seminoles and jump into pools of alligators to show off their wrestling skills. A first novel that was selected as one of the best books of the year in 2011. Fiction. 400 pages

A Tale for the Time Being by Ruth Ozeki

In Tokyo, sixteen-year-old Nao has decided there's only one escape from her aching loneliness and her classmates' bullying. But before she ends it all, Nao first plans to document the life of her great grandmother, a Buddhist nun who's lived more than a century. A diary is Nao's only solace—and will touch lives in ways she can scarcely imagine. Across the Pacific, we meet Ruth, a novelist living on a remote island who discovers a collection of artifacts washed ashore in a Hello Kitty lunchbox—possibly debris from the devastating 2011 tsunami. As the mystery of its contents unfolds, Ruth is pulled into the past, into Nao's drama and her unknown fate, and forward into her own future. Fiction. 422 pages

Tattoos on the Heart: The Power of Boundless Compassion by Gregory Boyle

As a pastor working in a neighborhood with the highest concentration of murderous gang activity in Los Angeles, Gregory Boyle created Homeboy Industries nearly 20 years ago as an organization to provide jobs, job training, and encouragement so that young people could work together and learn the mutual respect that comes from collaboration. This collection presents parables about kinship and the sacredness of life drawn from Boyle's years of working with gangs. Nonfiction. 217 pages

Tell the Wolves I'm Home by Carol Rifka Brunt

There's only one person who has ever truly understood 14-year-old June Elbus, and that's her uncle, the renowned painter Finn Weiss. Shy at school and distant from her older sister, June can only be herself in Finn's company; he is her godfather, confidant, and best friend. So when he dies of a mysterious illness her mother can barely speak about, June's world is turned upside down. But Finn's death brings a surprise acquaintance into June's life—someone who will help her to heal, and to question what she thinks she knows about Finn, her family, and even her own heart. Fiction. 360 pages

Tender at the Bone: Growing Up at the Table by Ruth Reichl

Former New York Times restaurant critic and editor of now defunct *Gourmet* magazine tells a wry tale of growing up with food. Her stories of family members (her mother could not cook, but their housekeeper was a

magician in the kitchen), mentors and the author's own anxieties are filtered through the lens of cooking and eating. Seasoned with glorious descriptions of adventurous meals, this is a unique coming of age story. Biography & Memoir. 282 pages

Their Eyes Were Watching God by Zora Neale Hurston

Janie Crawford tells the story of her life in a series of flashbacks, which she relates to her friend Phoebe. Sharing the experiences of an African American woman in the early 1900s, Janie describes her quest for fulfillment. The author, a prominent member of the Harlem Renaissance, pioneered the use of dialect long before it was used in *The Help*. Classic Fiction. 286 pages

Thirteen Reasons Why by Jay Asher

Clay Jensen returns home from school to find a strange package with his name on it lying on his porch. Inside he discovers several cassette tapes recorded by Hannah Baker—his classmate and crush—who committed suicide two weeks earlier. Hannah's voice tells him that there are thirteen reasons why she decided to end her life. Clay is one of them. If he listens, he'll find out why. Young Adult Fiction. 288 pages.

This is Where I Leave You by Jonathan Tropper

The death of Judd Foxman's father marks the first time that the entire Foxman family—including Judd's mother, brothers, and sister—have been together in years. Conspicuously absent: Judd's wife, Jen, whose 14-month affair with Judd's radio-shock-jock boss has recently become painfully public. Simultaneously mourning the death of his father and the demise of his marriage, Judd joins the rest of the Foxmans as they reluctantly submit to their patriarch's dying request: to spend the seven days following the funeral together. In the same house. Like a family. Fiction. 339 pages

A Thousand Splendid Suns by Khaled Hosseini

This is the second novel by the author of *The Kite Runner*. Two young Afghan women, both married off to the same middle-aged abusive husband, try to survive in a despotic household while also caught up in the throes of war. Hosseini successfully evokes the interior lives of these two very different women, who are brought together by dire circumstances. Fiction. 372 pages

Three Cups of Tea...One Man's Mission to Promote Peace One School at a Time by Greg Mortenson

In return for being sheltered by a small Pakistani village after a failed mountain climbing attempt, an American promises to build the village its first school. By the seat of his pants, with little funding and an openness to cultures different from his own, author Mortenson constructs schools throughout Pakistan and Afghanistan. Lively and inspiring. Nonfiction. 349 pages

Three Junes by Julia Glass

Covering three different months of June and told in three parts, this is the story of the McLeod family. Twists of fate, coincidences, the bonds that bring family and friends together and the stresses that keep them apart permeate this remarkable debut novel. Scotsman Paul McLeod, on a trip in Greece, recalls the courtship of his late wife and the creation of his family. The second part highlights Paul's son Fenno, a gay bookstore owner in Manhattan. The third part covers the young artist Fern, whom both Paul and Fenno know. Joyful and sad, the novel is written with great panache. 2002 National Book Award. Fiction. 353 pages

The Tiger's Wife by Tea Obreht

Remembering childhood stories her grandfather once told her, young physician Natalia becomes convinced that he spent his last days searching for "the deathless man," a vagabond who claimed to be immortal. As Natalia struggles to understand why her grandfather, a deeply rational man would go on such a farfetched journey, she stumbles across a clue that leads her to the extraordinary story of the tiger's wife. Fiction. 353 pages

The Time Traveler's Wife by Audrey Niffenegger

Imagine meeting your husband, who is naked, in a field when you are six years old. Clare and Henry seem like an ordinary couple, but he is a prisoner of time who travels back and forth from the present to the past. An original love story and dazzling science fiction for non-science fiction readers. Science Fiction. 546 pages

The Tipping Point: How Little Things Can Make a Big Difference by Malcolm Gladwell

The tipping point is that magic moment when an idea, trend, or social behavior crosses a threshold, tips, and spreads like wildfire. Just as a single sick person can start an epidemic of the flu, so too can a small but precisely targeted push cause a fashion trend, the popularity of a new product, or a drop in the crime rate. Gladwell explores and illuminates the tipping point phenomenon, which has changed the way people throughout the world think about selling products and disseminating ideas. Nonfiction. 301 pages

'Tis by Frank McCourt

Following up on his earlier *Angela's Ashes*, McCourt continues the chronicle of his life as he returns to New York after WWII, where he becomes a teacher at a rowdy vocational school. Full of triumphs, tragedies and observations about life, this is a heartwarming book by a favorite author. Biography & Memoir. 367 pages

To Kill a Mockingbird by Harper Lee

Set in the small Southern town of Maycomb, Alabama, during the Depression, *To Kill a Mockingbird* follows three years in the life of 8-year-old Scout Finch, her brother, Jem, and their father, Atticus--three years punctuated by the arrest and eventual trial of a young black man accused of raping a white woman. Though her story explores big themes, Harper Lee chooses to tell it through the eyes of a child. The result is a tough and tender novel of race, class, justice, and the pain of growing up. 1961 Pulitzer Prize for Fiction. Classic Fiction. 336 pages.

The Tortilla Curtain by T.C. Boyle

The story of illegal aliens in California, told through the eyes of two very different couples, one well-off Anglos, the other illegal Mexicans living in a canyon. The novel chronicles their relationship against the background of growing hostility between immigrants and natives. Fiction. 355 pages

A Tree Grows in Brooklyn by Betty Smith

Considered very frank when published more than 50 years ago, this story of a girl growing up in the squalor of turn-of-the-century New York is now considered a classic. Francie Nolan, a dreamer like her father and practical like her mother, is like a tree that grows out of the cement and survives the odds. Gentle and memorable, this book appeals to adults and teens. Classic Fiction. 493 pages

Tuesdays With Morrie by Mitch Albom

Writer Mitch Albom saw his former professor Morrie Schwartz on television one night talking about what it was like to be dying of Lou Gehrig's disease. What started as a reunion between student and teacher became the project of a lifetime, an inspirational account of Morrie's outlook on life, gleaned from 16 Tuesdays spent together. Inspirational. Nonfiction. 192 pages

Turn of Mind by Alice LaPlante – **ONE BOOK/ONE GLENDALE 2011**

Once a brilliant orthopedic surgeon who specialized in hands, Dr. Jennifer White retired when she started experiencing the symptoms of Alzheimer's disease. Now she narrates her own story, sometimes with the precision of her former career and sometimes through the prism of her unreliable mind. When her best friend turns up murdered, with several fingers surgically removed, Dr. White is the prime suspect. The suspense develops in this unusual and page-turning mystery. Fiction. 307 pages

Unaccustomed Earth by Jhumpa Lahiri

Eight stories take us from Cambridge and Seattle to India and Thailand as they enter the lives of sisters and brothers, fathers and mothers, daughters and sons, friends and lovers. *Unaccustomed Earth* is rich with Jhumpa Lahiri's signature gifts: exquisite prose, emotional wisdom, and subtle renderings of the most intricate workings of the heart and mind. Fiction. 333 pages

Unbroken: A World War II Story of Survival, Resilience and Redemption by Laura Hillenbrand

The story of Louis Zamperini, who grew up as an often incorrigible and always determined youngster in Torrance, ran in the 1936 Olympics and then was shot down in the Pacific during World War II and eventually endured years in Japanese prisoner of war camps. The author's attention to detail and the lure of readers to put themselves in the place of Zamperini make this a very triumphant story. Biography & Memoir. 473 pages

The Uncommon Reader by Alan Bennett

A novella that celebrates the pleasure of reading. When the Queen in pursuit of her wandering corgis stumbles upon a mobile library, she feels duty bound to borrow a book. Aided by Norman, a young man from the palace kitchen who frequents the library, Bennett describes the Queen's transformation as she discovers the liberating pleasures of the written word. Fiction. 120 pages

Under the Banner of Heaven by Jon Krakauer

At the core of this book is an appalling double murder committed by two Mormon fundamentalist brothers, Ron and Dan Lafferty, who insist they received a revelation from God commanding them to kill their blameless victims. Beginning with a meticulously researched account of this "divinely inspired" crime, Krakauer constructs a multilayered narrative of messianic delusion, polygamy, and unyielding faith, which is all the more interesting in light of current events involving the Mormon faith. Nonfiction. 399 pages

A Visit from the Goon Squad by Jennifer Egan

With an unusual cast of characters and a narrative that skips back and forth in time, this novel (which some claim is a collection of short stories) is stunning and compelling both for its subject matter and the way it is written. The main characters are aging rocker Bennie Salazar and Sasha, the troubled young woman who works for him. As the book progresses and lives intersect, the reader learns the intimate details of their lives, but the two characters never do. 2011 Pulitzer Prize for Fiction. Fiction. 340 pages

The Warmth of Other Suns: The Epic Story of America's Great Migration by Isabel Wilkerson

Pulitzer-prize winning journalist Wilkinson documents the Great Migration of African Americans who left the South for the North and West. This mesmerizing work tells the story of the migration by focusing on three people, who migrated during the 1930s, 1940s and 1950s. Each left their homes for different reasons, but each could not understand or tolerate the South's irrational and devastating racism. This compelling and quite intimate book manages to catch both the sweep of the migration while also highlighting the singular lives of those who lived through it. Nonfiction. 622 pages

Water for Elephants by Sara Gruen

Moving from the present to the past, a 90-year-old man remembers his days as a veterinarian with a Depression-era circus. This original and wonderful story has romance, a very memorable cast of characters and provides a gritty description of circus life that makes readers feel as if they are there. Fiction. 350 pages

The Water Is Wide by Pat Conroy

The well-known author's second book is an autobiographical account of his experiences as a teacher on a small impoverished island off the coast of South Carolina. Teaching students who have never even heard of George Washington, Conroy optimistically reaches out to give them a glimpse into a wider world. This is a funny and touching book. Biography & Memoir. 294 pages

West with the Night by Beryl Markham

West with the Night is the story of Beryl Markham—aviator, racehorse trainer, beauty—and her life in the Kenya of the 1920s and '30s. Biography & Memoir. 293 pages

We Were the Mulvaney by Joyce Carol Oates

Appearing to live charmed lives in their rambling New York farm house, the members of the Mulvaney family feel their world shatter when teenaged Marianne Mulvaney is raped. The book heartbreakingly traces the impact of the rape on each parent and sibling. A richly textured novel. Fiction. 454 pages

When the Emperor Was Divine by Julie Otsuka -- **ONE BOOK/ONE GLENDALE 2007**

A Japanese American family is forced to leave their Berkeley home during World War II and is incarcerated in a Utah internment camp. Sparsely told and modest in length, the story is related by each of the four family members. Historical Fiction. 144 pages

Where'd You Go, Bernadette by Maria Semple

When her notorious, hilarious, volatile, talented, troubled, and agoraphobic mother goes missing, teenage Bee begins a trip that takes her to the ends of the earth to find her. Fiction. 330 pages

Where the Heart Is by Billie Letts

Stranded at a Wal-Mart in Oklahoma with just \$7.77 the very pregnant 17-year-old Novalee Nation is about to find out about the kindness of strangers. The townspeople take in this young woman and give her the love she never had. Heartwarming vignettes and some brutal scenes with a terrible boyfriend mix in this book about the power of love. Fiction. 376 pages

White Oleander by Janet Fitch

Twelve-year-old Astrid, whose free-spirited mother is convicted of murder, is forced to become a foster child in three very different Los Angeles homes. With sensitive characterizations and spot-on locale descriptions, this is also a very provocative portrait of people in need. Fiction. 446 pages

White Teeth by Zadie Smith

Hapless Archibald Jones fights alongside Bengali Muslim Samad Iqbal in the English Army during World War II, and the two develop an unlikely bond that intensifies when Samad relocates to Archie's native London. Smith traces the trajectory of their friendship through marriage, parenthood, and the shared disappointments of poverty and deflated dreams, widening the scope of her novel to include a cast of vibrant characters. A remarkable examination of the immigrant's experience in a postcolonial world. Fiction. 448 pages.

White Tiger by Aravind Adiga

A fast-moving and darkly comic novel set in India, this is the story of a chauffeur who murders his employer and then tries to justify it by recounting his transformation from hard-working boy to killer. Contrasting the rich and poor of India, where many are often sacrificed for the elite few, this sharp satire is hilarious. Fiction. 288 pages

Who Moved My Cheese? by Spencer Johnson

The author of *The One Minute Manager* offers a parable about change, why we resist it and how we can accomplish it. This brief (94 pages) story about two mice and two humans who live in a maze offers ideas about how we can get motivated to make changes in our lives. Although directed at a business audience, the book can also be used as a resource for personal change. Nonfiction. 95 pages

Wicked: The Life and Times of the Wicked Witch of the West by Gregory Maguire

This magical story of the Land of Oz, before and up to the time Dorothy arrives, tells the story of Elphaba, the future Wicked Witch of the West. Born with green skin and huge teeth, she turns out to be a character we never knew, one with spirit, panache and intelligence. Imaginative, humorous and quite captivating. Fiction. Fantasy. 409 pages

Wild: From Lost to Found on the Pacific Crest Trail by Cheryl Strayed

At 22, Cheryl Strayed thought she had lost everything. Her mother was dead, her family scattered and her own marriage was soon destroyed. Four years later, with nothing more to lose, she made the impulsive decision to hike the Pacific Crest Trail from the Mojave Desert through California and Oregon to Washington State and to do it alone. Nonfiction. 315 pages

The Winter People by Jennifer McMahon

In West Hall, Vermont, some secrets never die.... In 1908 Sara Harrison Shea was found dead in the field behind her house just months after the tragic death of her daughter, Gertie. Now, in present day, Ruthie lives in Sara's farmhouse with her mother, Alice, and her younger sister, Fawn. When Ruthie wakes up one morning to find that Alice has vanished without a trace, she is startled to find a copy of Sara Harrison Shea's diary hidden beneath the floorboards of her mother's bedroom. Ruthie is not the only person who's desperately looking for someone that they've lost... but she may be the only one who can stop history from repeating itself.... Fiction. 382 pages.

Wonder by R.J. Palacio

August Pullman was born with a facial deformity that, up until now, has prevented him from going to a mainstream school. Starting 5th grade at Beecher Prep, he wants nothing more than to be treated as an ordinary kid—but his new classmates can't get past Auggie's extraordinary face. The book begins from Auggie's point of view, but soon switches to include his classmates, his sister, her boyfriend, and others. These perspectives converge in a portrait of one community's struggle with empathy, compassion, and acceptance. Fiction. Children's. 315 pages

The Worst Hard Time: The Untold Story of Those Who Survived the Great American Dust Bowl
by Timothy Egan

The dust storms that terrorized America's High Plains in the darkest years of the Depression were like nothing ever seen before or since, and the stories of the people that held on have never been fully told. Pulitzer Prizewinning New York Times journalist and author Timothy Egan follows a half-dozen families and their communities through the rise and fall of the region, going from sod homes to new framed houses to huddling in basements with the windows sealed by damp sheets in a futile effort to keep the dust out. Egan tells a story of endurance and heroism against the backdrop of the Great Depression. Nonfiction. 340 pages.

The Year of Magical Thinking by Joan Didion

Writers Joan Didion and her husband John Gregory Dunne were a couple well known for their innovative books and solid marriage. When Dunne died of a heart attack, just after the two had returned from the hospital where their only child was lying in a coma, Didion tries to make sense of a world where little makes sense. This memoir is how one woman tries to get a grip on the unthinkable. 2005 National Book Award. Biography & Memoir. 227 pages

Year of Wonders by Geraldine Brooks

When an infected bolt of cloth carries plague from London to an isolated village, a housemaid named Anna Frith emerges as an unlikely heroine and healer. Through Anna's eyes we follow the story of the fateful year of 1666, as she and her fellow villagers confront the spread of disease and superstition. As death reaches into every household and villagers turn from prayers to murderous witch-hunting, Anna must find the strength to confront the disintegration of her community and the lure of illicit love. As she struggles to survive and grow, a year of catastrophe becomes instead annus mirabilis, a "year of wonders." Historical Fiction. 308 pages.

Zeitoun by Dave Eggers

In the wake of Hurricane Katrina, longtime New Orleans residents Abdulrahman and Kathy Zeitoun are cast into an unthinkable struggle with forces beyond wind and water. In the days after the storm, Abdulrahman traveled the flooded streets in a secondhand canoe, passing on supplies and helping those he could. A week later, on September 6, 2005, Zeitoun abruptly disappeared—arrested and accused of being an agent of Al Qaeda. Nonfiction. 337 pages

The Zookeeper's Wife by Diane Ackerman

Cool-headed and clever Warsaw Zookeeper Jan Zabinski and his wife Antonina sheltered Jews and war resisters by hiding them in bombed out animal cages, and in their own house, in World War II Poland. Antonina's quiet, but knowing, personality and great kinship with animals highlight this marvelous true story. Sympathetic and quietly humorous, this marvelous work is a special treat for animal lovers. Nonfiction. 368 pages

Zorro by Isabel Allende

Popular author Isabel Allende traces and fictionalizes the life of the California legend and folk hero *Zorro*, who fought for the underdog despite his privileged upbringing. Born o de la Vega in Alta California and educated in Spain, the main character transforms from callow youth to Zorro, his dashing alter ego who is a hero with some flaws. History and fiction mix in this colorful (duels at dawn, evil villains, beautiful damsels in distress), witty and very readable novel. Historical Fiction. 416 pages